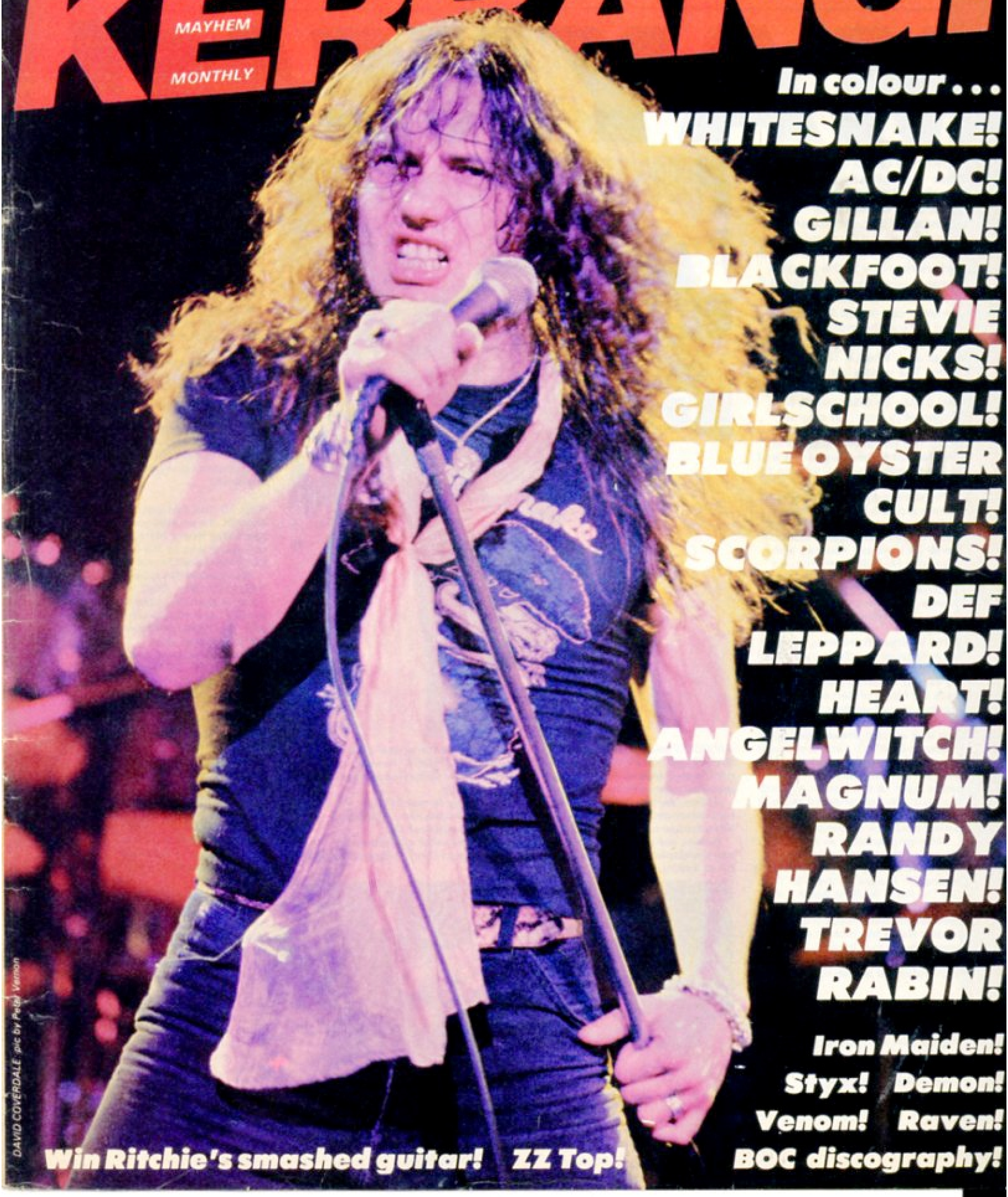
No.3 September 1981 50p

KERRANG!

METAL MAYHEM MONTHLY



DAVID COVERDALE pic by Peter Vernon

In colour . . .

WHITESNAKE! AC/DC! GILLAN! BLACKFOOT! STEVIE NICKS! GIRLSCHOOL! BLUE OYSTER CULT! SCORPIONS! DEF LEPPARD! HEART! ANGELWITCH! MAGNUM! RANDY HANSEN! TREVOR RABIN!

Iron Maiden! Styx! Demon! Venom! Raven! BOC discography!

Win Ritchie's smashed guitar! ZZ Top!

KERRANG!

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MAYHEM!

BURNING QUESTION of the hour — judging by the number of calls to *Kerrang!* — is who is behind the heavy metal soundtrack that accompanies that nifty advert for Limara deodorant (the cartoon one with girl-snaring-boy in the jungle). Some readers even wondered if it was **Led Zep** themselves. But *Kerrang!* can reveal that the man behind the music is none other than **Jeff Wayne** of David Essex and 'War Of The Worlds' fame. The vocals are provided by a lady called **Dee Dee Lang**, and it may be released as a single fairly soon. Of course.

DOES THE arrival on the scene of **Whitford-St Holmes** signal the end for **Aerosmith**? *Kerrang!* wouldn't be at all surprised.

The stunningly-titled Whitford-St Holmes group is the brainchild of ex-Aerosmith man **Brad** (Whitford) and one-time **Ted Nugent** sideman **Derek** (St Holmes). You may also remember Mr St Holmes from his short-lived **St Paradise** outfit, where he played alongside bassist **Rob Grange**, also late of the Loudman's classic 'Snakeskin Cowboys' line-up.

The Whitford-St Holmes debut is out in America shortly (dunno about plans for British release) and, as we've said, its arrival would seem to leave the future of Aerosmith in the balance. Heavily in debt following a spate of cancelled tour dates and with lead vocalist **Steve Tyler** gone mysteriously AWOL, at the moment it seems highly unlikely whether we'll see the band onstage or on record again. A sad fate for a group that must have squandered millions of dollars and were once America's hottest hard rock attraction.

Meantimes another ex-Aerosmith player, guitarist and Keith Richards copyist **Joe Perry** has just issued his second LP 'Project' in the US, 'I've Got The Rock 'N' Rolls Again'. We hear of plans to bring his remodelled crew (minus original vocalist Ralph Mormon, it would seem) over to tour the UK, maybe in the autumn. Second best is better than nothing at all, we suppose.

AND TALKING about Whitford-St Holmes and the Joe Parry Project, their two new albums form an integral part of a campaign recently launched in the US by CBS Records — a campaign crassly tagged 'Heavy Metal Headbangers'.

Yes folks, you too can be the unwilling victim of 'the perfect promotion for die-hard HM fans — featuring the free sampler 'Speaker Death'!

Seems that record companies in the States have finally woken up to the eternal popularity and selling power of HM. This, of course, at a time when beloved soft rock and wimp-out AOR are not shifting the units as of old.

In an amazingly inept rip-off of phrases and images of the British scene, a recent advertisement in US trade magazine Billboard tells record retailers not to 'waste time banging your head against the wall, complaining about a summer slack off! Have your salesmen start hyping Heavy Metal Headbangers now!'

And with such mayhemic albums as 'Loverboy' and Journey's 'Escape' to get behind, this sort of thing doesn't do much for HM's credibility.



pic by Ross Halfin

ANXIOUS to dispel the bad publicity created by the gutter press with their cheap 'OZZY BITES DOVE'S HEAD OFF SHOCK' headlines, reknowned animal-lover and philanthropist Mr Ozzy Osbourne is pictured here with two of his many furry friends.

Above, we see him tenderly holding a young terrier in the recommended teeth-in-the-scruff-of-the-neck manner. "Barbara Woodhouse taught me this one," admits the modest Oz.

Below, we see Mr Osbourne making friends with a somewhat startled-looking deer. "I love all animals," says Ozzy. "Especially with a bit of ketchup on."



pic by Chris Walter

AND AS if all that wasn't bad enough, the soundtrack to the upcoming Heavy Metal movie contains tracks by the likes of Devo, Don Felder and Donald Fagen!

Man behind the project, **Irving** 'Urban Cowboy' **Azoff**, warns that "people shouldn't take the title too literally" and explains that it comes from the *magazine* Heavy Metal and not the musical style.

Despite the dorks above being present on LP, the project does contain some interesting artists, including **Cheap Trick** and **Sammy Hagar** — new songs from them have been produced by **Roy Thomas Baker**. **Stevie Nicks** is also in there somewhere.

"We had to be real careful because we didn't want people to think we were just trading off the name," continues Azoff. "We didn't want heavy metal fans to think they're getting ripped off, yet we didn't want to turn off the mainstream pop audience."

In other words, it's a cop-out.

BIG TEASERS from Barnsley **Saxon** have just this moment finished work on their fourth album, provisionally titled 'Never Surrender', after the current chart single.

Recorded in Geneva, Abba's studios in Stockholm and with the final mixes done in London, Saxon are keeping pretty tight-lipped about the project, promising only "more of the same ... but different" (whatever that means).

While completing the LP in London, Saxon invited a horde of headbangers down to grunt, scream, whistle and add the occasional "WOOARGHHH!" to the

chorus of their latest HM anthem 'Denim and Leather'. Guitarist **Graham Oliver** was the only Saxon unable to attend the session as he was laid up with food poisoning in Switzerland. Nevertheless, when *Kerrang!* met up with him backstage at the recent Heavy Metal Holocaust festival, he revealed that he was pleased with the end result and enthused over the vocal abilities of the various invited kids. **Biff** had better watch out.

ON THE subject of that Heavy Metal Holocaust extravaganza, it was sad to see last issue's *Kerrang!* komments koncerning Kanadian kick-ass krew **Triumph** hitting the nail squarely on the head. If you remember, on the caption to the colour picture of band bass player **Mike Levine**, we wondered whether this 'Rock 'N' Roll Machine' was 'a pristine showroom modèl or a second-hand vehicle with 70,000 on the clock'.

Unfortunately, at the HMH, the latter proved to be the case. For, following an extraordinarily powerful set from **Frank Marino's Mahogany Rush**, Triumph did indeed fail their MOT test. Drummer **Gil Moore** seems to be singing most of the songs these days and, lacking a frontman, the other two band members failed dismally to whip up the crowd. After the show, encoreless, they disappeared into their dressing room, finally emerging some hours later looking extremely tight-lipped and solemn. Even a hilarious set from **Ozzy Osbourne** failed to raise a smile from the Toronto trio.

Still, the band should have a new album out by the time you read this. And believe it or not, it's pretty hot — tracks like 'Air Raid' and 'Allied Forces' are bound to reactivate UK fans' enthusiasm and a song called 'Hot Time (In This City Tonite)' is likely to become the successor to the all-time great 'I Live For The Week-end'.

But is it coincidence, we wonder, that the last track on the second side is called 'Say Goodbye'? We at *Kerrang!* hope that Triumph weren't discouraged by their HMH reception and return to these shores pretty soon, and with a full show. It's amazing the good a couple of thousand light bulbs can do.

REMEMBER OUR **Black Axe** feature in *Kerrang!* issue one? Well since then the band have laid down a five track demo at London's Trident studios. Produced by one-time **Queen** engineer **John Anthony**, it's high quality stuff, well worthy of release in its own right.

The demo includes, of course, the Axe anthem 'Head Contact Rock 'N' Roll' — destined to become an HM classic, if only enough pairs of ears get to hear it. *Kerrang!* will keep you posted of further developments.

KISS' 42nd album is finally due out in the autumn – rather behind schedule, as it was originally to be released in February!

Despite the bad-mouthing the man received from fans for his work on the 'Destroyers' LP, **Bob Ezrin** is producing again (at band member Ace Frehley's New York studios) and the band promise "something a little off the wall, but not straying too far from the classic Kiss concept".

We can't wait — and by the way Al, we haven't had a Kiss colour picture for two issues now. WHY NOT?

FOLLOWING THE item on **Grand Funk**, leader **Mark Farner** in collector's item issue one and the re-review of the band's 'Good Singin', Good Playin'' LP in edition two, *Kerrang!* has good news to impart. Which is: Grand Funk Railroad have reformed and are currently in the studio in LA, laying down a new album. It's being co-produced by Andy Cavaliere, the group's manager, and Bob Destocki and it's promised that this modern-day 'E Pluribus Funk' will be in the shops around Christmas time. Shine on!

GREG LAKE appears to have finalised the line-up of his band. It includes **Gary Moore** on guitar, **Hugh McKenna** — previously drummer for the Alex Harvey band — and **Tommy Eyre**. The foursome are rehearsing in deepest Devon at the moment before playing at Reading Festival. This suggests that Moore has finally given up on **G-Force** — the band has been thwarted with problems since the outset and Jet Records' refusal to release Moore's latest elpee which is, incidentally, well worth releasing, must have been the final straw.

IN SPITE of rumours to the contrary, **More** are not on the verge of splitting up. Quoth guitarist **Laurie Mansworth**: "What do you expect when a band's been on the road for seven months? Obviously we've been getting on each other's nerves

continues over

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

... Ritchie Blackmore's wrecked guitar to be won!

RECOGNISE the fresh-faced youth below, the one on the left in the back row, he of the long hair and floral shirt? Today he's in one of the biggest heavy rock bands of all time, but way back in the Seventies he was an unknown in a band who never made it. Name the man, name the band and tell us who he plays with today.

Put the answers on a POSTCARD and send to: Where Are They Now, Kerrang!, 40 Longacre, London WC2.

First correct card out of the bag wins one of Ritchie Blackmore's broken guitars which we managed to snatch off the man at the end of one of his recent gigs! He's kindly autographed it, too, so it's a gen-u-ine Collector's Item. Next two correct answers win Kerrang! T-shirts.

Last month's winners

You guessed it. The not-so-mysterious figures in last month's pic were Roger Glover and Ian Gillan, who way back in the 60s played in a band called Episode Six.

First two entries out of the proverbial (and very large) bag were Eddie Knox of Penwortham, Preston, Lancs and Helen Balach of Basford, Stoke On Trent, Staffs, who both win a pair of monogrammed drumsticks from Rainbow drummer Bobby Rondinelli.

Runners up were William Keogh of Castlemilk, Glasgow and Henry Staddon of Penarth, S. Glamorgan who both win Kerrang! T-shirts.



TOUR NEWS

CHANCES ARE that it's already over by the time you read this. But if you're one of the eager beavers who buys *Kerrang!* as soon as it hits the streets you may like to know — as if you could hardly FAIL to know — that Saturday August 22 brings us the second Castle Donnington 'Monsters Of Rock' bonanza featuring **AC/DC, WHITESNAKE, BLUE OYSTER CULT, SLADE, BLACKFOOT** and **MORE.** It promises to be a great day (see items in 'Mayhem') and *Kerrang!* will have a tent there to give away badges etc.

Kerrang! will also be at the Reading Festival the following weekend. Again, you can hardly fail to know who's on by now, but let's just remind you that it stars **Girlschool** on Friday August 28, **Gillan** on Saturday 29 and **Kinks** on Sunday 30. Other star names sprinkled over the three days include **Wishbone Ash** (Sunday), **38 Special, Greg Lake, Climax Blues Band, Saga, Outlaws, Billy Squier, Rose Tattoo, Trust, Steve Hackett, Budgie and Lighting Raiders.**



TRUST: hoping that the Reading audience won't be too 'Anti-Social'.

STYX are playing Stafford Bingley Hall on November 7 and Wembley Arena on the 8th.

FOREIGNER are in Britain for three concerts in August — their first since they topped the bill at the Reading Festival in 1978.

The concerts are at Birmingham Odeon August 25, London Hammersmith Odeon 26 and Edinburgh Playhouse 31.

WHITESNAKE will be appeasing their Scottish fans by playing two nights at the Edinburgh Playhouse on August 26 and 27.

HAWKWIND have lined up a 23-date tour of Britain in October. The band, who are currently recording a new album at Rockfield Studios, are down to a four-piece line-up of Dave Brock, Hugh Lloyd-Langton, Harvey Bainbridge and Martin Griffiths.

The tour starts at Manchester Apollo on October 1 and continues at Leicester De Montfort Hall 2, Liverpool Empire 4, Derby Assembly Rooms 5, Birmingham Odeon 6, Sheffield City Hall 7, Preston Guildhall 8, Glasgow Apollo 9, Edinburgh Odeon 10, Newcastle City Hall 11, Hull City Hall 12, Bradford St Georges Hall 13, Coventry Theatre 15, Hanley Victoria Hall 16, Ipswich Gaumont 17, St Albans City Hall 19-20, London Hammersmith Odeon 21-22, St Austell Cornwall Colliseum 24, Southampton Gaumont 25, Bristol Colston Hall 26, Oxford Theatre 27.

SAXON make their biggest tour so far in October, supported by **RIOT.** Dates are Portsmouth Guildhall October 8, Leicester De Montfort Hall 9, Stafford Bingley Hall 10, Bristol Colston Hall 11, Cardiff Sophia Gardens 12, Ipswich Gaumont 14, Sheffield City Hall 15 and 16, Leeds Queen's Hall 17, Glasgow Apollo 18, Edinburgh Playhouse 19, Newcastle City Hall 20-21, London Hammersmith Odeon 24-25.

SPIDER, boogie band at the Quo end of the HM spectrum, continue a lengthy tour with dates at Colwyn Bay Dixieland August 18 (with Silverwing), Birkenhead Sir James 19, Peterlee Norseman 20, Ashton Under Lyme, Spreadeagle 21, Blackpool JR's Rock Club 22, Ilkston White Lion 23, Carlisle Mick's Place 26, Hailsham Crown 28.

JUDAS PRIEST make their first major tour for nearly two years, starting at Manchester Apollo November 7-8 and continuing at Leicester De Montfort Hall 9, Bristol Colston Hall 10, Cardiff Sophia Gardens 11, Birmingham Odeon 12-13, Glasgow Apollo 15, Newcastle City Hall 16-17, Sheffield City Hall 18-19, London Hammersmith Odeon 21-22.

MICHAEL SCHENKER GROUP are touring in September to coincide with the release of their second album on Chrysalis. The revised schedule now reads: Wolverhampton Civic Hall September 1, Sheffeild City Hall 3, Newcastle City Hall 4, Edinburgh Odeon 5, Manchester Apollo 6, Bristol Colston Hall 8, Southampton Gaumont 9, Hanley Victoria Halls 10, Ipswich Gaumont 12, London Hammersmith Odeon 13 and 14, Leicester De Montford Hall 15, Birmingham Odeon 17, Liverpool Empire 18, Bradford St George's Hall 19, Newcastle City Hall (extra show) 20.

OZZY OSBOURNE's Blizzard of Ozz tour starts at Bristol Colston Hall on November 29 and then continues at Cardiff Sophia Gardens 30, Leicester De Montfort Hall December 1, Liverpool Royal Court December 2, Edinburgh Playhouse 4, Glasgow Apollo 5, Newcastle City Hall 6-7, Manchester Apollo 18, Leeds Queen's Hall 19, Stafford Bingley Hall 22, London Hammersmith Odeon 24 and 26.

PLAY LOUD! the new releases

SINGLES

BYRON BAND: Never Say Die/Tired Eyes **(Creole)**
DIAMOND HEAD: Diamond Lights **(DHM)**
EXCALIBUR: Film Theme **(Island)**
HAWKWIND: Motorhead/Valium **(Flicknife)**
GASKIN: I'm No Fool **(Rondelet)**
GENESIS: ABACAB/Another Record **(Charisma)**
FOREIGNER: Urgent/Girl On The Moon **(Atlantic)**
GREEN BULLFROG (alias pre-Rainbow Blackmore): Natural Magic **(Pacific)**
JON AND VANGELIS: State Of Independence/Beside **(Polydor)**
STEVIE NICKS: Stop Draggin' My Heart Around/Kind of Woman **(WEA)**
ALAN PARSONS PROJECT: Time/The Gold Bug **(Arista)**
RAGE: Bootliggers/Live In Paris **(Carrere)**
JIM STEINMAN: Rock And Roll Dreams Come Through **(Epic)**
THIN LIZZY: Trouble Boys/Memory Pain **(Vertigo)**
SAXON: Never Surrender/20,000 Feet **(Carrere)**
SPIDER: All The Time/Feel Like A Man **(City)**
LOVERBOY: Turn Me Loose **(CBS)**
UNION: Main Street USA **(Portrait)**
YARDBIRDS: For Your Love/Heart Full Of Soul **(Old Gold)**
YARDBIRDS: Still I'm Sad/Evil Hearted You **(Old Gold)**

ALBUMS

ALLMAN BROTHERS: Story Of **(German Polydor)**
PAT BENATAR: Precious Time **(Chrysalis)**
DEMON: Night Of The Demon **(Carrere)**
DEP LEPPARD: High 'N' Dry **(Phonogram)**
BLUE OYSTER CULT: Fire Of Unkown Origin **(CBS)**
EXCALIBUR: Film Soundtrack **(Island)**
FOREIGNER: 4 **(Atlantic)**
FORTRESS: Hand In The Till **(Atlantic)**
JIMI HENDRIX: Cosmic Turnaround **(Audio Fidelity/Spartan)**
KROKUS: Metal Rendezvous **Ariola budget reissue)**
MOTHER'S FINEST: Iron Age **(Epic)**
STEVE MILLER: Greatest Hits 1974-78 **(Mercury)**
STEVIE NICKS: Bella Donna **(WEA)**
COZY POWELL: Over The Top **(Ariola budget reissue)**
RIOT: Rock City **(Ariola budget reissue)**
RUSH: Through Time **(German Phonogram)**
SHAFTESBURY: We Are The Boys **(OK)**
BILLY SQUIER: Don't Say No **(Capitol)**
ZZ TOP: El Loco **(WEA)**

MCA have reissued the following albums in album and cassette form at £2.99 . . .
CAMEL: Camel
TYGERS OF PAN TANG: Wild Cat
JOE WALSH: Live
JAMES GANG: Best Of
STEPPENWOLF: Gold
WISHBONE ASH: Classic Ash
GARY MOORE: Back On The Streets (MCA)
LYNYRD SKYNYRD: First And Last

CASSETTES:

WEA have reissued the following as two-album cassettes, retailing for around £4.99 . . . **VAN HALEN** I and **VAN HALEN** II; **THE DOORS** Morrison Hotel and LA Woman; **FLEETWOOD MAC** Rumours and Fleetwood Mac.

And Polydor have released **RAINBOW:** On Stage as a special-price double cassette.

MAYHEM!

from page 3

but we're certainly not splitting up!"

Mind you, More do have some damning complaints about the recent *Sounds* Atomic Rock Show, in which they 'starred', describing the general organisation as "a joke".

LIONHEART have more or less swopped drummers with **Wild Horses**. Although it's already known that ex-Lion **Frank Noon** has joined Horses along with working partner **Reuben Archer,** we now hear that ex-Horse **Clive Edwards** is drumming for Lionheart! Incidentally, Lionheart completed their recent support tour with **Def Leppard** using old **Judas Priest** man, **Les Binks**. When informed of this fact, Priest's **Glenn Tipton** was heard to mutter that they were welcome to him!

STILL on the subject of errant drummers, **Samson** have lost their sticksman/ace face **Thunderstick**, replacing him with one **Mel Gaynor** who, believe it or not, used to drum for funksters **Light Of The World**. (Light Of The World are incestuously connected with **Beggar & Co**, part of the **Spandau Ballet** mob, which makes the changeover even more odd.) Meanwhile, Thunderstick is putting his own combo together — tentatively titled **Thunderstick's Lightning**? — and looking out for a singer.

RUSH guitarist **Alex Lifeson** has finally been awarded his pilot's licence although drummer **Neil Peart,** in cowardly **Ross Halfin** fashion, still refuses to fly anywhere unless he absolutely has to.

JUDAS PRIEST guitarist **K K Downing** has revealed exclusively to *Kerrang!* that he *never* wears underwear. None, that is, 'cept the occasional spandex 'n' zips number purchased from LA's infamous Pleasure Chest.

AC/DC are planning to take their Hell's Bell to Castle Donington. The close proximity of the East Midlands airport also suggests that **Whitesnake** may, after all, be landing in helicopters on the festival site. And, more mundane but equally important, punters should be well catered for with loads of facilities and a menu including everything from barbecues and fish 'n' chips to curry and spring rolls. So say the organisers, anyway . . .

GRAHAM BONNET presently employing the assistance of a crate of Pils daily in order to help his work on up-and-coming solo elpee, an album which includes contributions from **Cozy Powell** and **Whitesnake's Micky Moody**. He'll be taking time off, however, to pop up to Donington.

IS IT TRUE that half of **Geezer Butler**'s family is employed to work for **Black Sabbath**?

SCURRILOUS rumours Stateside suggest that **UFO's Phil Mogg** recently took an overdose. But surely that's his normal state?

HOLOCAUST IS THE ELEMENT IN WHICH THE CREATURES OF THE NIGHT LIVE AT THEIR FULLEST! IN LEAPING FLAME AND CRASHING STONE, THE **FIERCEST** OF THEM ALL EXULTS IN THE DESTRUCTION OF EVIL! THE DUNGEONS AND LABORATORIES OF A MAD SORCERER ARE **CRUMBLING!** IT IS THE **END** OF A HEINOUS AND TWISTED EXPERIMENT WITH LIFE! IT IS---

THE NIGHT OF THE DEMON!*

by GEOFF BARTON

CHAPTER 1.



pix by Paul Slattery

UNUSUALLY, THIS feature begins not with a full-throated cry of 'WOOARGHH', but rather with a queasoid croak of 'BLECHHH'.

This is the sound that escapes your lips (hopefully to be followed by nothing else) upon first sight of the sleeve that — uh — decorates the debut Demon album, 'Night Of The Demon'.

The cover depicts a graveyard cross embedded in the ground, framed by strands of unnaturally-tinted green grass. Out of the sick-coloured earth around it thrusts a pair of hands, veins standing out on their backs, fingers curled like vulture's claws.

They're tearing frantically at the body of the headstone, which is revealed to be sinisterly organic and not composed of your usual marble at all. The menacing mitts have scraped away at its surface to disclose ugly intestines writhing within, at any moment likely to spill out on to the soil and start slithering like slimy, sinuous snakes . . .

The accompanying reocrd is split into two distinct halves: five songs of a 'Devil Rides Out' design (side one), together with another five of a more straight - down - the - line rock 'n' roll nature (side two).

The opening cut is very much a statement of intent. It's a spectacularly spooky spine-tingler name of 'Full Moon' — cries of *'Beelzebub!'* and chants of *'Rise . . . rise . . . rise . . .'* reverberate above doomy, 'Phantom Of The Opera' droning.

** Title artwork courtesy of DC Comic's 'The Demon', issue number 13. Edited, written and drawn by the master, Jack 'King' Kirby*

This leads into the more traditional but equally terrifying title track (*'Better lock up your doors / And get off the streets / If you fear for the reaper of souls,'* run the lyrics) and the pace is set for 20 minutes or so of malodorous, Mephistophelian mayhem. Great entertainment, but only if you leave your living room light switch turned firmly *on*.

The flip, like I say, is completely without Hammer horror pretensions and provides a total contrast. Why, it's almost as if an exorcism had been performed between sides . . .

ENTERING THE reception area of the Beeb's Maida Vale recording emporium, I ask for directions to Studio Four and immediately start quaking in my Simmons stackheels. However, with a Bible in my pocket, a string of garlic around my suitcase and Holy Water replacing the usual tot of brandy in my hip flask, I reckon I'm prepared for any eventuality.

Demon are here to lay down a session for Radio One's 'Friday Night Rock Show'. I only hope Tony Wilson has taken similar precautions . . .

A commissionaire leads me through labyrinthine corridors to Demon's dwelling place and I push back a soundproofed door with some trepidation, wishing I had a crucifix to thrust out in front of me. My eyes suddenly settle on the collective Demons and my heart skips a beat because they all look ordinary. Thoroughly ordinary.

Grouped around a cluster of mike stands and guitar cases, the five men reveal themselves to be in the Saxon / Quartz class of motley non-teenage Northerners. Either moustachio'd or bearded, mostly denim clad and all of indeterminate ages, if this band entered the World's Most Beautiful Man steeplechase they wouldn't even leave the starting stalls.

I'm greeted by lead singer Dave Hill (no relation to the Slade member of the same name) and it's suggested that we both go into the control room for a quiet tete-a-tete. On the way, I mention that while I'm relieved that Demon don't appear to be fearsome acolytes of the devil, by the same token they're not exactly spring chickens either . . .

"No, that's true," chortles Hill. "We've all played in rock bands for a long time throughout the North, pretty obscure outfits you've probably never heard of. But yeah, we've all paid our dues if you like. Hardened pro's of the game, y'know . . ."

We settle into the impressive studio nerve centre and, continuing along the background tack, I ask Hill for the facts on Demon itself.

"Well, we've been together since late 1980," he reports, "when we did our first single, 'Liar'. We started to record our album in January of this year. It's the end result of an idea Mal (Spooner, Demon guitarist) have had for ages. Shall I say that people have done your 'Jesus Christ Superstar', done your 'Godspell'. It's always been our ambition to do something for the opposition, like."

Hill reveals that Demon hail from Stoke and that, besides himself and the aforementioned Spooner, the band comprises Clive Cook (guitar), Paul Riley (bass) and John Wright (drums). They're signed to local label Clay Records (along with punksters Discharge, would you believe). A licensing deal with Carrere is ensuring decent album distribution.

This is all news to me, as the cover to 'Night Of The Demon' stomach-churning though it may be, gives no information about the group whatsoever. Was this a conscious decision, to build up an air of mystique and obscurity?

"Yes," says Hill, "we wanted to keep people very much in the dark about the band and its personnel. It's only an initial thing though, a gimmick to set the ball rolling. We're not going to bury our heads in the sand, it's just from a promotion angle."

How about the X-rated album sleeve? A lot of heavy metal bands flirt with horror imagery / lyrics, using them as attention-grabbing devices. One or two others have been known to take, shall we say, deeper interests. What's Demon's satanic standpoint?

"We'd like to get ourselves going as a concept sort of band," says Hill, keeping an amazingly straight face.

"We're not just using all this as a cheap, as you say, attention-grabber. We'd really like to develop what we're doing in a classy way — but keep it simple, on the lines of good and evil, without talking about the cults and all that. We've alway been interested in black magic and all that, but obviously we don't go around practicising it or anything."

Despite this denial of involvement, I maintain that that first track on the LP, 'Full Moon', has the power to raise the dead.

"I know what you mean," agrees Hill, adding proudly, "none of the voices have been slowed down or anything. You're hearing everything exactly as it was."

Indeed, during the recording of that particular cut, there were peculiar happenings aplenty in the Demon studio. A whole tape was mysteriously erased ("The engineer reckoned it was quite impossible") and the band's cars kept on suffering from punctures in the near offside wheels, for no apparent reason. Brrr!

"It's a great beginning to an album though, isn't it?" enthuses Hill. "That first side really sums up what we're doing. We're asking, what is darkness and what is light? Instead of getting into witches' brooms and suchlike we're saying, well, there's darkness and there's light and where do you draw the line? There's a devil in everybody."

Why is the platter divided into two radically different sections?

"Well, while we had confidence in all this 'curse of the damned' stuff, we thought there was a slim chance that people mightn't take to it, that it mightn't work. So to hedge our bets we recorded a side full of just your basic sort of singalong, bangalong everyday rock. That was the reason, to kind of keep our options open. But in the future I'd like to become associated with the phrase 'concept rock' —"

Arghh! That word again! I'm sorry, but for me 'concept' conjurs up terrible visions of things like 'Tales From Topographic Oceans' . . .

Hill is unrepentant. "I thought 'Tales From Topographic Oceans' was a great album, as it happens. But I can see what you're getting at. We're not intellectuals though, so rest assured we don't intend to get into our own trips. We won't be getting too deep and going over the heads of our listeners."

THIS IS far into the future, however. Uppermost in the band's mind at present is the prospect of taking to the road with a dynamic Demonic show.

Says Hill, "There's always been three periods with this group. One was the album cover, the second was the record itself and the third will be actually putting across the material onstage. At the moment we're adding the finishing touches to our live thing. We're aiming to build our performance around the LP and we're hoping to begin playing dates around the end of August or early September."

You're planning lots of special effects?

"Ahh, that would be telling," teases a tight-lipped Hill. You'll have to come along and see for yourself."

How about sacrificing a virgin onstage? I suggest deviously.

"Definitely not," says Hill. "And in any case, there aren't many of them left these days, are there?"

DEMON: "There's a devil in everybody."



WHITESNAKE

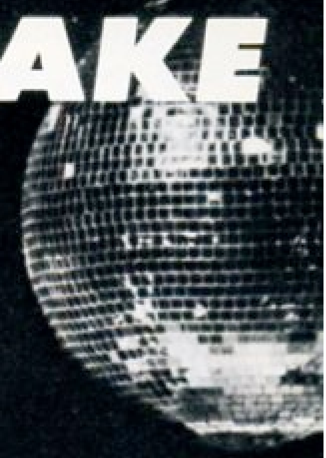
Pic on this page by Robert Ellis. Pix opposite by Peter Vernon



David Coverdale


Neil Murray
Bernie Marsden
Ian Paic
Mick Moody
Jon Lor

YEARS OF THE 'SNAKE



IN THE early months of 1976, the "world's loudest band" packed its bags and said goodbye to what was, undoubtedly, one of the biggest success stories in modern music history . . . or did it?

While Deep Purple's disintegration was inevitable — despite claims to the contrary, any band resorting to separate hotels, separate limos etc is being led by its collective ego towards disaster — what *is* surprising is the manner in which the various former Purple men have steamed back to the forefront of heavy rock.

Riding not upon an old name but on newly carved reputations, Gillan, Rainbow and Whitesnake have won back the hearts of Kerrangland in no uncertain fashion. Of the three, Whitesnake — forsaking skull-crushing metal mania for their own unique blend of heavy traditional r&b — have the most interesting tale to tell.

1977
'WHITESNAKE' (Purple TPS. 3509) Released May. ****

While the UK was shuddering under the assault of McLaren's Sex Pistols and the no-holds-barred era of punk rock, David Coverdale made a most unfashionable move and released 'Whitesnake', an album comprised of songs written while he was with Purple, songs which were basically "unsuitable" for the band.

Including such numbers as 'Lady' and 'Blindman' and featuring drummer Simon Phillips and ex-Juicy Lucy/Snafu/Frankie Miller guitarist Micky Moody, 'Whitesnake' fared well at the hands of *Sounds*' Geoff Barton who described it as "nine tracks where Coverdale can strut his stuff minus inhibitions and — lo and behold — actually *sing*".

Indeed, Coverdale's main concern with his solo ventures appears to be that he was "singing actual songs". "I don't wanna scream no more," he said. Apparently, he succeeded.

Quoth Barton: "No 'Wooaayeahyeahs' here."

1978
'NORTHWINDS' (Purple TPS 3513) Released March. ***
'DAVID COVERDALE'S WHITESNAKE' EP (Includes 'Bloody Mary'/'Steal Away'/'Ain't No Love In The Heart Of The City'/'Come On') (EMI INT INEP 751) Released June.
'LIE DOWN (A MODERN LOVE SONG)'/'DON'T MESS WITH ME' (EMI INT INT 568) Single released September.
'TROUBLE' (United Artists UAG 30305) Released October. ****

Although Mr C. had been heard to say that he hadn't "really got the ego to go out and front a band called Coverdale or something" 1978 saw the birth of David Coverdale's *Whitesnake* — perhaps the next safest monicker.

The line-up included three of today's Snake-men — ex-Colosseum II/ National Health bassist Neil Murray, ex-PAL/Babe Ruth/Cozy Powell's Hammer guitarist Bernie Marsden plus Micky Moody — along with David Dowle on drums and Brian Johnston on keyboards.

After the release of 'Northwinds' — recorded mainly as a session elpee and considered, again by Barton, to be good if a little restrained — the band set out on their first tour of clubland, delighting audiences and gathering rave reviews a-plenty.

According to Geoff Barton *(Not another namecheck! — Ed)*, spectators were bound to feel that they were "witnessing the beginning of something just a little bit special". While waxing lyrical over Whitesnake's edition of 'Mistreated', he even went so far as to say that "even if they'd played only *one* song, the inherent greatness of David Coverdale's new outfit couldn't possibly have gone by unnoticed". So remember where you read it first!

For Coverdale, the experience of playing sweaty clubs was an eye-opener: "Some of these gigs haven't had the capacity to get my equipment in . . . not my genitals, but stuff like lights." Mind you, he was certainly aware of the power of the press and especially of the now-familiar term, HM. He didn't like it!

"It seems the media have become alienated from my music, which comes from the heart, and call it heavy metal, not even human, not even flesh and blood."

Bernie Marsden had another word for it. "Whitesnake," he said, "is a loud R&B band".

October marked the release of 'Trouble', the first "real" Whitesnake album — "father figure" Jon Lord overdubbed the keyboards tracks and then joined the band — which, although bordering on the edges of "jazz rock" was immediately dubbed "an honest, entertaining, more - varied - than - you - might - expect British rock album".

It also marked the band's first major UK tour and one date that remains cherished to this day was the opening night in Coverdale's home town of Newcastle where the audience took over the reins of 'Ain't No Love In The Heart Of The City', forcing the band to applaud *them* and earning themselves — and all Snake audiences — the longstanding name, "the Whitesnake choir".

Of the emotional experience, Coverdale said: "Sometimes it actually transcends sex. For that moment. Although I find sex the most ecstatic form of experience, that was unique!"

Jon Lord was more succinct: "Years of planning couldn't have improved tonight. It was absolutely right, absolutely correct."

1979
'TIME IS RIGHT FOR LOVE'/'COME ON' (EMI INT 578) Single released March.
'LONG WAY FROM HOME'/'TROUBLE'/'AIN'T NO LOVE IN THE HEART OF THE



pic by Fin Costello

CITY' (EMI INT BP 324) EP released October.
'LOVEHUNTER' (United Artists UAG 30264) Released October. ****

Naturally, the good press couldn't last and, for Whitesnake, 1979 was the year of the chopping block. Geoff Barton had already expressed doubts at the band's penchant for individual spots in his coverage of their Christmas Hammersmith Odeon concert — "everything got self-indulgent with gratuitous solo spots and the evening lost its spark" — but now every hack in the land had knives sharpened.

Quoth *Sounds'* Mick Middles: "Coverdale is *not* a good singer, an enormously powerful warbler, really very average frontman and an unimaginative and abysmal songwriter."

If this wasn't enough, he went on to describe the audience as "lemmings vanishing by their hundreds", a comment which more than enraged Coverdale who has, after all, always been as aware of his fans as they have been of him.

However, worse was to come. 'Lovehunter' sported a cover illustration of a naked woman astride a snake — remember? — and the sexist content of the sleeve, designed incidentally by a *Men Only* artist, infuriated feminists (and a number of male feminists!), especially in the US where the album went out in a brown paper jacket. Whitesnake, and Coverdale in particular, were dubbed sexists.

Naturally this issue has since been batted around like an out-of-control tennis ball but there has, and never will be, any doubt as far as Coverdale is concerned.

"When I talk about a woman then I mean the ultimate piece. Something wonderful. I love women in general and I'm not denigrating them at all. I'd hate equality in the physical sense. I mean, I wouldn't want to see women delivering coal — have you ever been to any of the Slav countries and seen the women there? I wouldn't like to see the West that way!"

Mucho macho music, indeed!

1980
'FOOL FOR YOUR LOVING'/'MEAN BUSINESS'/'DON'T MESS WITH ME' (United Artists BP 352) EP released in April.
'READY AN' WILLING' (United Artists UAG 30302) Released in May. ****
'READY AN' WILLING (SWEET SATISFACTION)'/'NIGHTHAWK (VAMPIRE BLUES)'/'WE WISH YOU WELL' (United Artists BP 363) EP released in July.
'LIVE IN THE HEART OF THE CITY' (United Artists SNAKE 1) Released in October. ***
'AIN'T NO LOVE IN THE HEART OF THE CITY'/'TAKE ME WITH YOU' (United Artists BP 381) 12" single released in November.

When Ian Paice replaced David Dowle in the Whitesnake drumseat, a number of people suggested that Coverdale was "furtively reforming Deep Purple under the Whitesnake banner". Certainly, three out of six is a lot of Purple blood but the singer has always been quick to insist that the band is *not* comprised of an 'old pals act'.

"The reason that Jon and Ian are in the band is not because they are ex-Deep Purple. It's just because they're dynamite musicians. Jon and Ian were always talking to me about joining Paice Ashton and Lord — but I thought the name CLAP might have been a bit out of the window!"

And as for the lucrative idea of reforming Purple . . . well, you'd have to be blind, deaf and dumb not to realise that Coverdale and Blackmore aren't the closest of bosom mates although there *are* other reasons, one being that the former doesn't want anything to do with the "dirty money".

"I don't mind being called a whore," he retorts, "but I draw the line at prostitute."

No need to harbour such ideas anyway for, by 1980, Whitesnake were already earning enough to feather their nests. 'Ready An' Willing' proved they meant business and, more important, 'Fool For Your Loving' established them in the commercial singles market with its catchy pop emphasis.

The double live album, 'Live In The Heart Of The City' was released as a thank-you to Whitesnake's fans — and as a consolation for those who'd bought the Japanese overpriced import edition! — and the band stormed on into Europe (with AC-DC) and the States (with Jethro Tull) where Coverdale admitted that he *hated* supporting.

"Must be a bit of ego creeping in there. I do *not* like being an opening act, I'm sorry."

1981
'DON'T BREAK MY HEART AGAIN'/'CHILD OF BABYLON' (EMI BP 395) Single released in March.
'COME AN' GET IT' (EMI LBG 30327) Released in April ****
'WOULD I LIE TO YOU'/'GIRL' (EMI BP 399) Single rleased in May.

1981 has, so far, been the year of the Snake with massive chart success for the band's 'fifth' album, 'Come An' Get It' — probably their best vinyl effort to date and described variously in *Sounds* as "a splendid album" and "a cleanly, powerfully produced record" — and the sort of headline tour that most newcomers dream of, culminating in an astonishing five nights at the Hammersmith Odeon.

Huge in Japan and not so small in the US either, Whitesnake are now mega, a fact that is sometimes worrying in that it has separated them a little from their audience — I still can't abide their fast escapes after each concert — but no-one can deny that they deserve it.

Says Coverdale: "We're learning! We're still growing up together. Whitesnake don't do a run-of-the-mill rock show in the terms of heads-down mindless boogie and these guys are just too good not to be featured. The idea of a Whitesnake show is not just to go wallop wallop wallop goodnight. There's a bit of thought and some soul goes into it."

ROBBI MILLAR



ARMED & READY

GEOFF BARTON with this month's harvest of heavy hopefuls



SACRED ALIEN: This oddly-named HM four-piece hail from Manchester and have been together for approximately eight months.

Opening act at the recent Diamond Head / Silverwing / Venom / Tora-Tora UMIST metal festival, Sacred Alien are as conscious of their visual appearance onstage as they are of the quality of their music. 'We approach every gig in as professional a manner as possible,' they report. 'Apart from a huge back line, we also have our own small 5KW lighting rig complete with pyrotechnics.'

Included in the band's line-up are two (shock-horror!) art college students: Sean Canning, 17-year-old vocalist and fan of Halford, Ozzy and Dave Lee Roth, and Cozy Powell-influenced drummer Chris Lea (19). The membership roll-call is made up by guitarist Martin Ainscow (he's also aged 19 and his hero is Jimi Hendrix) and bassist Dave Clowes (20-year-old and a great admirer of the Who's John Entwistle).

Sacred Alien's four track demo is pretty intriguing. Not your traditional headbanging fare, it's characterised by epic, almost 'free-form psychedelic' guitar work, high pitched vocals and wordy, perhaps 'mystical' lyrics. One earful of the song called 'Portrait' and you'll hear what I mean.

Queen, Led Zeppelin and Rush are the names that come to mind when you search for influences — Ainscow occasionally cops licks from Alex Lifeson and Canning's flexible vocal work alternately soars like Freddie Mercury's and then wails like Robert Plant's. The end of a track called 'Energy', for example, is almost 'Achilles Last Stand' revisited!

Meanwhile 'Eternal Flame', an infectious inferno, is likely to be the debut single and as long as the group abandon their attempts to be 'sensitive' and 'meaningful' (a reference to the atrocious beginning to 'Both Sides Of The Globe') a healthy future is assured. Remember you read it here first . . .



'THE RODS' is perhaps the US metal debut album of the year.
Recently released on Arista records (and unfortunately still only
available on import over here) it's jam packed with
statement-of-intent songtitles such as 'Crank It Up', 'Rock Hard',
'Power Lover' and 'Get Ready To Rock 'N' Roll'.
'This is heavy rock,' we hear, 'pure and simple, forged from a
belief that harder is better'. No messin'.
A three piece, the New York State-based Rods (hate the name,
though) have a long and involved history. Guitarist / lead vocalist
David 'Rock' Feinstein (above, centre) is no spring chicken. He first
came to prominence in the mid-Sixties as a member of, would you
believe, Ronnie Dio's band the Prophets. Later known as the Electric

Elves (cashing in on the psychedelic era) and then simply Elf, the
group signed to Epic in '71 and Feinstein recorded one album with
them before leaving under mysterious circumstances and taking up a
hermit-like existence.
He built a log cabin in the wilds and, without electricity or
telephone, shut himself away from the outside world for the express
purpose of unblowing his mind and generally 'recovering from the
Sixties'. He re-emerged almost 10 years later (boy, his mind must
have really been blown) and decided to return to civilisation as a
Rod.
Accompanied by a bass player, Gary Bordonaro, and a truly terrific
drummer, Carl Canedy, Feinstein's current purpose in life is to
become 'the meanest, loudest and fastest man ever to pick up a
guitar'. And, you know, with 'The Rods' he's well on his way to
succeeding.
And by the way, in case you're wondering, this group has zilch to
do with those 'Do anything You Wanna Do' dodos Eddie And The
Hot Rods. Thank God . . .



DO YOU want your band included in our 'Armed
And Ready' section? No problem. Just despatch
(1) a demo tape, (2) a band fact sheet and (3) a
decent photo to Armed And Ready, c/o Kerrang!

GBH: a bit of a Venom situation as regards this one. For GBH is a popular name: to my knowledge there are at least three bands playing the circuit under this label, the most famous/notorious of which is a punk band, recently signed to the Clay Records label.

However, while the spikey tops' moniker is probably an abbreviation for 'Grievous Bodily Harm', this here HR band (pictured right), have taken the initials from its previous incarnation, Great British Heroes.

The Heroes were well-known on the London gig circuit and once released a single on Lightning Records. When they split late last year dual guitarists Graham Reed and Mick Feleppa began the search for members to form a new band.

First acquisition was Phil Lewis lookalike Steve Wilde (ex-May West . . . remember their track on 'Brute Force', MCA's answer to EMI's Metal For Muthas'?). The five man line-up was completed by the arrivals of bassist Andy Jack (late of Vibrators spin-off group Knox) and drummer Graham Roberts (one-time skins beater with Bird Of Prey, alongside Paul Di'Anno, current Iron Maiden vocalist).

GBH will embark on a 'First Offence' tour at the tail end of August, concentrating on venues in London and South-East England. Later in the year they plan to cover other parts of the UK, hopefully as support act on a major tour.

Having rather unprofessionally lost my copy of GBH's demo tape, I'll leave it to the band to describe their music. 'A solid, jazz-like rhythm section backs a harmonic twin guitar attack,' complementing the raunchy vocals,' they report, adding that this combination 'just can't fail to leave an audience demanding more'. We shall see . . .



KILLER (right) are based in Salisbury and have problems in persuading anyone 'of influence' to travel to the standing stones-strewn wilds of Wiltshire and witness their brand of murderous metal. This in spite of a five track demo tape which, the band claim, has attracted the interest of several record companies.

A cut-throat quintet, Killer have been together for a year and comprise Alan Marsh (vocals), Andy Boulton (guitar), Ray Dismore (guitar), Andy Robbins (bass) and Steve Pierce (drums). Their emblem — a snarling, scaled dragon-cat hybrid, very Dennis Wheatley — is a successful amalgam of weirdness, witchcraft and demonic design.

In the past two months the group have begun to venture into the capital's venues and immodestly proclaim that they regularly receive 'amazing responses' considering their unknown status. "We are now attracting audiences in excess of 250 every time we play at the Horseshoe in London's Tottenham Court Road," says Bassman Robbins proudly.

Musically, Killer play an 'unusually original' brand of HM, 'combining hard-driving rhythms with closely-knit guitar and vocal harmonies'. Tapes are available from 28 Waterloo Road, Salisbury, Wilts — free to anyone whose interest might expose the band to a wider audience. Only serious applicants please as, natch, supplies and financial resouces are limited.





EXCITER: stand by for Exciter! (pictured left). As the name implies, this band's 'greatest idols' are Judas Priest. A throughly normal obsession for any young group, you might think. But what isn't so normal about this lot is that (1) they're Dutch and (2) they contain a member who's a mere 14 years old!

Out of the four members, three are brothers: very much a family affair. Gert Admiraal plays bass and sings lead vocals, Walter Admiraal is the drummer and Marcel Admiraal is the aforementioned youngster on the lead axe. Odd man out is Mark Karsten, also a guitarist.

I'm lifting these facts from a letter sent to me by one Harry Dijkema, informing me of Exciter's existence. 'They play now a year together,' reports Harry, 'and they have own equipment and they change it in Marshall. Three of the boys are working and from their earned money they buy good equipment.

'Gert,' he continues, 'writes all the songs from the band and they are much influenced by the bands from the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal like Raven, Saxon and Iron Maiden.'

Exciter's two-track demo tape is at the very least, uh, interesting. Although 'Meet You in Hell' and 'See The Diamond' sound untogether and a little shambolic they are, by the same token, extremely frantic and very, very heavy. It's as if the band have the ideas, but not as yet the technical abilities to make them work to their best advantage.

The Klaus Meine-style voice is something of a turn-off, but the smallest Admiraal (see him on the far right of the picture?) more than makes up for the inadequacies in the vocal department with his astonishing virtuoso guitar playing.

This boy is a star! And Angus Young had better watch out: if Marcel chose to, he could dress up as a satchel-carrying schoolboy onstage and do it legitmately!

THESE MEN ARE NOT AS DAFT AS THEY LOOK

THE RELEASE of 'El Loco', the new album by 'that little ol' band from Texas,' hasn't come a moment too soon. It's been twenty long months since the release of their last block-buster, 'Deguello', but now one of the most popular and enduring of all American rock and roll bands is back with their most ambitious and accomplished offering to date.

'El Loco's' ten tunes are each certifiable ZZ classics — fast, furious and funky rock and roll that finds the trio stretching in all sorts of new musical directions — from 'Leila' a beautiful ballad, to the sinuous groove of 'Tube-Snake Boogie', to the hair-pin curves of 'Pearl Necklace'.

Along the way they deliver some of the sharpest lyrics ever set to a backbeat — 'Groovy Little Hippie Pad', 'Ten Foot Pole' 'Heaven, Hell or Houston', titles like these say it all.

ZZ Top origins stretch back to two seminal Texas outfits; Houston's Moving Sidewalk, featuring a young guitarist named Billy Gibbons and, from Dallas, a band called American Blues (formerly The Warlocks) sporting bassist Dusty Hill and drummer Frank Beard. Both bands had cut some sides in the late '60s — Moving Sidewalk's '99th Floor' was a regional hit — but it was after American Blues split up that destiny laid its heavy hand on the door knocker. Frank was the first to make contact with Billy in Houston, later calling down Dusty with the idea of forming a trio.

ZZ Top was birthed in February of 1969, with the same line-up it retains to this day. "It's always been the same," remarks Billy Gibbons. "The only difference is we had smaller amps."

The infant band played in the Houston area for a short time before releasing their first single, 'Salt Lick' b&w 'Miller's Farm', on their manager Bill Ham's Scat label. Their first LP was cut shortly afterwards and was soon snappped up by London Records and released as 'ZZ Top's First Album' in 1971. What followed was a period of intensive touring as an opening act for countless bands ranging from Alice Cooper to Ten Years After to The Rolling Stones.

"That was back when a Texas band was considered really hick," recalls Dusty. "A lot of people thought we were a country group."

It wasn't an impression that lasted long. Following *'Rio Grande Mud'*, their second LP (released in 1972), the band hit paydirt with *'Tres Hombres'* the platinum selling 1973 release featuring their first smash single 'Le Grange', an ode to an infamous Texas whorehouse. It was followed in '75 by *'Fandango'*, another platinum seller, containing their second mega-hit 'Tush'.

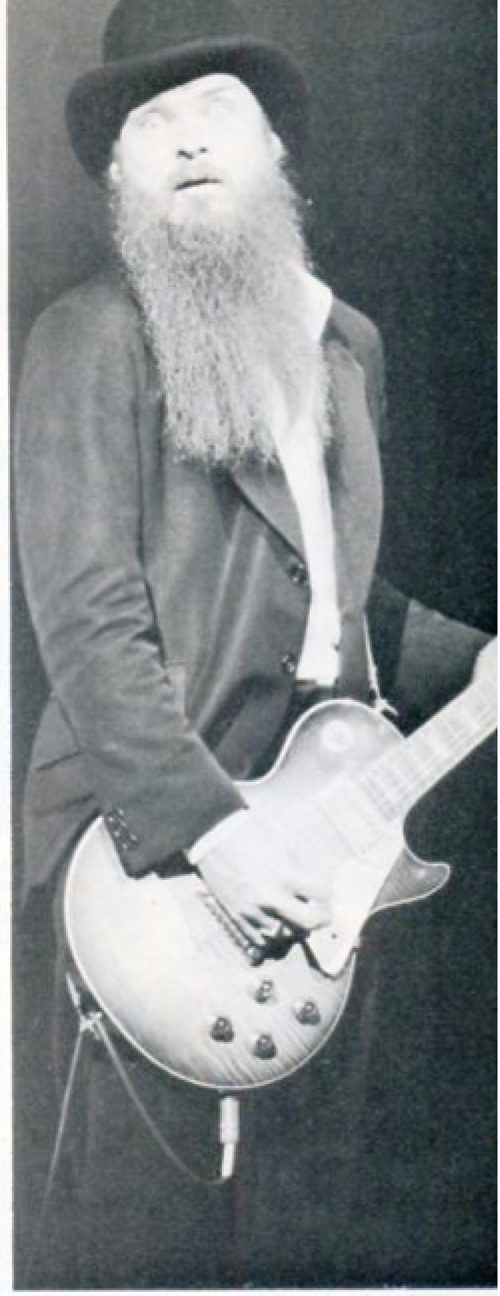
ZZ Top had arrived and in case anyone still doubted the fact, the band embarked on their legendary World Wide Texas Tour in 1976 and early '77 in support of their third platinum album, *Tejas*.

It is a tour still spoken of in reverent tones in rock circles — an event measured in triple digits: 1.2 million tickets sold, 11 million dollar gross, 1,440 man hours needed to erect the stage (which included $140,000 worth of native Texas animals and livestock), capacity crowds and broken attendance records everywhere. The highlight of the World Wide Texas Tour was a 4th of July concert in Philadelphia.

The Police don false beards and sunglasses in a pathetic attempt to disguise themselves as Texas boogie supremos ZZ TOP



BILLY GIBBONS: pic by Ross Halfin



THEN AS quickly as they had burst into international prominence, they disappeared.

"We didn't break up," explains Frank. "We just needed a break. When it happened, we had no idea how long it would last."

It lasted three year. Rumors abounded — the band had been killed in a plane crash, were jamming in a Houston R&B club, had been converted to Tibetian Buddism. Cryptic messages were received sparadically from around the world.

The truth was no less strange. Frank set off for a week's cruise in the Caribbean and just didn't come back. Part of the time he lived like a hermit, the rest of the time like an international playboy. Dusty tried scuba diving off the Cayman Islands and sailing around the Pacific. Billy lived for a time in a Paris art colony and on the island of Madagascar. What filled the rest of those three years will forever be shrouded in band's mythology.

"It was good for us all, personally and musically," asserts Billy. "It was a great time of individual understanding and doing what we needed to."

In September of 1978, the band broke its long, self-imposed exile by signing an exclusive contract to Warner Bros. and entering the studio to cut *'Dequello'*. Excited to be back in the saddle, they set out on an extensive concert tour to back the album, before taking time off in January of '81 for more r&r. This time Billy ended up on the Indian sub-continent, on a 200 mile walk through Tibet in search of the Abominable Snowman.

"I had an encounter with something up there," he remarks mysteriously. "I don't know what it was, but I wrote a song about it called ("I Wouldn't Touch It With A) Ten Foot Pole."

ZZ Top returned to the studio earlier this year to cut *El Loco* before charging back to the stage for their current 1981 North American concert swing. With a great new album and SRO crowds at every stop, ZZ Top is ready to take the '80s by storm.

FROM UP on stage it's hard to tell how big the place is — it could be a basketball court, a football stadium or the Grand Canyon. Is that steam rising from the packed mass of shouting fans or just a trick of the orbs?

It's hard to tell from behind these blazing spots, but the audience seems to be forming into one huge entity, hungry for thick slabs of boogie, roaring out their need for another shot of rhythm and blues, starving for a rock and roll feast. Shirts are off and waving, nubiles hoisted on their boyfriend's shoulders sway like trees in the wind, and the stiff, sweet scent of herb clots the air.

Sound familiar? It's a scene enacted a thousand times each season in the arena ritual of big-time rock and roll. Any of the top five concert bands today might generate the same kind of fervent footstomping enthusiasm witnessed here in the Municipal / County / Civic / Auditorium / Coliseum / Sports Center of Anyburg, USA.

So what's so different about tonight? Well, the band for one thing. No perms, satin trousers or photo-ready poses here. Just three guys in some rather work-worn mechanics coverall's, bowler and top hats and chest length beards playing some of the most floor rattling wall-of-sound riffs to ever peel a coat of paint.

But hold everything! This isn't just volume for the sheer, self-gratifying hell of it. There's something more to the proceedings than the macho bluster and relentless commercial overkill most of those aforementioned top five concert draws. These guys are in *control* — that wordless camaraderie that speaks of years of staying and playing together. Because it feels good to make music.

That's something you can't fake, and the audience knows it. Like the gears in some precision tuned juggernaut, this bass, drum and guitar combo *mesh*, turning out a joyful noise that spreads out across the dark expanse on waves of euphoria. This is Big Beat the way it was meant to be — no pretence, no postures, just pure, pulsating good times!

And the lyrics! This isn't your average formula filler of the no - one's - listening - to - the - words - anyway tradition. No mock mysticism or proto-Vegas cliches here. Au contraire. These tunes are about the important things in life — 'Cheap Sunglasses' and 'Silk Stockings'; a 'Groovie Little Hippie Pad' and 'Party On The Patio'.

Yearning for a new dance sensation? How about the 'Tube Snake Boogie?' Need a quick comeback for that crass come on? Try 'I Wouldn't Touch It With A Ten Foot Pole'. Dare we say it? In the deadly serious game of rock music these guys are writing . . . funny words.

The kids know. They're out of their seats now, pressing against the police lines, shouting out song titles, hugging each other, jumping up and down. In a world where paychecks shrink faster designer jeans and the only alternative to getting old is dying young, we all need a little ZZ Top.

BACKSTAGE, Billy, Dusty and Frank are winding down. It's an arduous process, considering the awesome amperage they collectively generated on-stage a half hour ago. Even after a dressing room shower and a change of clothes, the trio's electrons bounce around the overlit room like a flock of suicidal ping-pong balls.

Lead guitarist, vocalist and songwriter Billy Gibbons is the first to lock into earth orbit. Dressed in white tennis shorts, sneakers, a beige twill sports coat and a gold braided baseball cap, Gibbons offers some insight into what it means to play good music to millions.

"It's fun being a cartoon character up there on stage," he remarks in a soft Texas drawl, "but there's a lot more to us than that. Sometimes I feel like we're two different bands. We're entertainers up there and we do a hell of a job of it, and then we're musicians, pure and simple. There's a lot of integrity to our music. In many ways we're really a musician's band and that's hard to get across live sometimes.

"In a stadium — and we've played a mess of them — you've got to try and please everyone," adds bassist Dusty Hill, dressed entirely in white to match his pale, flowing beard.

"People want to *see* the band. We try hard to duplicate what we do on record, but that's not enough. When you're up there, the show's what's important."

"If people come to see us and hear straight boogie, that's alright," offers Frank Beard, the band's laconic, slow-eyed drummer. "If they pick up on the other stuff that's happening in the music, that's okay too."

"No one will ever pick up on everything we do anyway," interjects Gibbons with a knowing glint in his eye, "because a lot it is just between us."

The band seems thirsty. Bottles of sparkling water, cans of brew and more than a few swallows of vodka are thrown back with abandon. Outside a limo waits to steer them through the knots of faithful fans waiting at the backstage ramp. Talk turns to the band's latest Warner Bros. release, *'El Loco'*, the seventh LP of their career and their most accomplished offering to date.

"We really stretched out on this one," opines Hill. "You know, we try out a lot of different kinds of styles — a *lot* — at rehearsals and sound checks and such, and all that's starting to come through now."

He isn't kidding. *El Loco* features the most beautiful ballad ZZ Top has ever committed to plastic, 'Leila' and it's a real surprise — all steel guitars and Beach Boys harmonies.

"I love the Beach Boys," Gibbons admits immediately. "I think Brian Wilson is a genius. Frankly, I tried to sound like Brian on that cut."

"It's a complete departure for us," concedes Beard. "But I think ZZ's audience will take to it right away. We want to keep our good thing going, but add to it also."

Undoubtedly it is on record — especially *'El Loco'* — that the sharp double edge of ZZ Top's music is most in evidence. A high level of musicianship combines with some of the smartest wordplay this side of Randy Newman to create songs where hard driving rock and high flying humour get the best of each other.

"We do some funny stuff," admits Gibbons, "but you can't make people appreciate that. They just have to discover it for themselves."

"Back to basics and a real good time, is what we're all about," assets Hills.

The others nod vigorously in agreement. "We're all really hopeful about out prospects this year," Gibbons remarks. "We're in show business and make no bones about that fact."

Bill Ham, ZZ Top's long-time manager, announces last call to the next stop on the group's 1981 U.S. tour swing. On their way to the cavernous underground garage, Gibbons, Hill and Beard offering some thoughts on one of the best and most misunderstood bands ever to break the big time.

"It's all coming together," predicts Gibbons, aiming himself towards the limo's open back door. "The entertainment and musicianship of ZZ have never been closer. I think a lot of people, especially critics, are going to be surprised at what they hear coming out of this band."

"We've been around a long time," agrees Hill, "and I think folks are finally getting the idea. We're not just another bunch of pretty faces" — the crack elicits muffled laughter from the entourage. "— we're three guys who've been working at what we do longer than a half dozen bands put together."

"We're just waitin' for people to catch up," grins Beard as the car door shuts and the long black car speeds off.



HEART

Day On The Green, San Francisco

pic by Ross Halfin



BLUE OYSTER CULT

Day On The Green, San Francisco

pic by Ross Halfin

CULT (facts and) FI

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT go in and out of fashion like a yo-yo, but their blend of arcane intellectualism and HM has gained them a large enough hard core following over the last 10 years to make them a worthwhile proposition for CBS to keep on its books. The latest Cult disc, 'Fire Of Unknown Origin', has shot straight into the USA chart so maybe they're about to do an REO Speedwagon and at last become a supermega outfit.

This discography is mainly a fan's analysis of the band's ten official albums, and therefore doesn't masquerade as being an exhaustive study of the inevitable obscurities the group has thrown up along the way, like the American promo single of 'Godzilla' (one side studio, one an early live take), the UK clear vinyl 45 of 'Mirrors' (which came in a mirror sleeve), or the version of 'Buck's Boogie' included on the CBS heavy rock compilation LP 'Guitars That Destroyed The World'.

One only has to mention that the group began as Soft White Underbelly (after toying with names such as The Knife-Wielding Scumbags!), before recording a fabulous psychedelic album for Elektra as Stalk Forrest Group. The amazing Love-like LP even had a completed (typically beautiful) Elektra sleeve, but has never been issued. A few copies of a single did escape, called 'Arthur Comics' (one can only hope the recent upswing in BOC's career might prompt Elektra to put out the LP after all these years).

Critic Sandy Pearlman became the group's manager, producer and lyric-helpmate. Stabilising line-up, changing name to Blue Oyster Cult and conniving, he eventually got CBS to sign the group by getting them to record a distinctly HM demo for an A&R man at the company who had just been working with Johnny Winter and who, in Pearlman's words, "was looking for something equally obnoxious".



The ploy worked; that demo can be heard on the excellent bootleg pictured here. *'BOC / Soft White Underbelly' (Maserati LP ME-262)* has the 4 tracks 'Workshop Of The Telescopes', 'Cities On Flame With Rock & Roll', 'The Red & The Black' and 'Buck's Boogie' (all of which soon emerged in glossy official form), plus a slick sleeve with pix and lyric sheet! Now the story begins officially:

'BLUE OYSTER CULT' (CBS 64904) February 1973

Recorded in October 71 by Pearlman, Murray Krugman and David Lucas, but not issued here until Feb 73, BOCs stun-gun debut got a rave in 'Rolling Stone' for its unabashed flash. The lyrics were mystical HP Lovecraft-style rants on the nature of conspiracy and evil, while the music was as hard as one might hope for from Pearlman, the man who first took William Borough's phrase



'HEAVY METAL' and used it as a musical term.

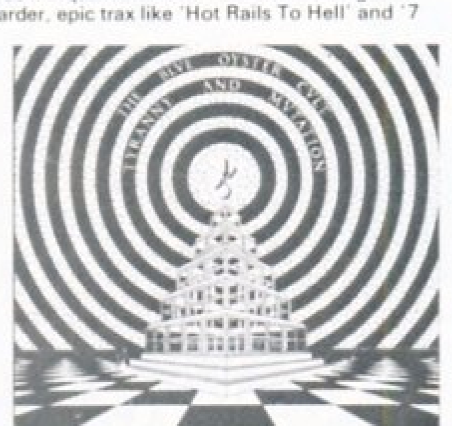
It was an interface of ancient, near unsingable druidic litanies and modern technology. The lyrics, appropriately enough, were to be had only on computer-printout forms for those who wished to send off to the US. Bass / drums by Joe and Albert Bouchard, rhythm guitar / keyboards by Allen Lanier, keyboard / stun-guitar / vocal yowls by leatherman Eric Bloom, and a bona-fide axe hero in Donald (Buck Dharma) Roeser.

They all sang, in fact, with the exception of Lanier; subjects: the insane motorcycle club of 'Transmaniacon MC', the drug murder of 'Then Came The Last Days Of May'... traces of psycho-delia remained: the phases of phasing in 'Screams' and the acoustic white magick in 'Redeemed'. The Cult were number one in a field of one; call it 'sinister uniqueness'.

'TYRANNY & MUTATION' (CBS 65331) May 1974.

The Cult's 2nd album emerged in the USA laden with stickers blaring critical comparisons likening the band to The Doors and Velvet Underground, but our own John Peel was nearer the mark when he found similarities to mid-60s acidpunk bands such as Count 5 and Syndicate Of Sound.

The cover of the record was again by Gawlik, all Escheresque B&W cosmik geometry harnessing the Greek symbol for chaos: a sort of upside-down crucifix / question mark. The music had got harder, epic trax like 'Hot Rails To Hell' and '7



Screaming Diz-Busters', full of spitfire vocals and screaming axes.

There was a new version of 'The Red & The Black' (which had been on the first disc, incorrectly listed as 'I'm On The Lamb, But I Ain't No Sheep'), and Lanier's girl Patti Smith helped out on lyrics for one song, as did rock crit R. Meltzer. Still a Cult band in every sense.

"Our songs are a fantasy distillation of reality," they proclaimed. Actually, they were Pearlman's projection of an intellectual version of Black Sabbath.

'SECRET TREATIES' (CBS 80103) June 1974.

CBS eventually released this and *'Tyranny'* within a month of each other in 74, albeit minus the red / black labels and delightful innersleeves. 'Treaties' had a lighter production and seemed framed within a WW2 magical deal theory. The monster of 'Harvester Of Eyes' ended up having a comic based on it, while 'ME 262' was about a war plane.

But the ace was Patti Smith's 'Career Of Evil' lyric: *"Capture you, inject you / Leave you kneeling*



in the rain". Pre-*'Horses'*, poetics of a mini-Hitler. This was a million miles away from the average heavy rock concerns. BOC were still conscious of the fact that *parody* of a style had got them signed.

'ON YOUR FEET OR ON YOUR KNEES' (CBS 80703 / 4) April 1975.

A live double. The Cult have never been ones to close ranks, so they didn't mind telling the world that the cover cost a lot and that they considered the LP a real *stinker*. 'On Tour Forever' sneered



the stickers, and that's how they felt. Bored with the songs and it showed in the ramble-tamble readings, but since concerts were the Cult's saving slash at this time the album did rather well. Worth having for the oldies, notably a manic ride thru Steppenwolf's 'Born To Be Wild'. A rotting luxury.

'AGENTS OF FORTUNE' (CBS 81385) June 1976.

By 76 the band were getting peeved with Sandy's MC5 concept of HM production, which entailed screeching up the treble to tin-melt level and letting the bass fend for itself. David Lucas

GURES

A Blue Oyster Cult discography by Sandy Robertson



came back to help Krugman & Pearlman, the Brecker Brothers blew their horns and Patti Smith both wrote and vocalised, with 'The Revenge Of Vera Gemini' and the poem set to music, 'Debbie Denise'.

The album was lush, poppy, wild . . ., and there was a *hit single!* '(Don't Fear) The Reaper', which may have been about a suicide pact but all the punters head was The Byrds reincarnated in *that* jangling fretwork. The Cult were on top of the world; but the shock was only to cause them more trouble.

'SPECTRES' (CBS 86050) January 1978.

The days when BOC were in trouble with the Jewish League for being supposed neo-Nazis were gone — the lads were mostly Jewish themselves anyway, and that paramilitary stuff was naught but a party that got outta hand.

This LP was a blatant attempt to stay in a hit single frame of mind. Old themes like monsters ('Godzilla') and bikers ('Golden Age Of Leather') were present, albeit in exaggeratedly humorous



formats, but the near-cinematic realisation of their mystical pop themes got thoroughly misconstrued.

The brilliant '96 Tears' update of 'Goin' Through The Motions' (co-authored by Ian Hunter) should've been a hit, but when it wasn't not even the diehard HM fans could be counted on to be swayed by the Doorsian craftsmanship of 'I Love The Night' and 'Nosferatu'.

Geoff Barton in *Sounds* slammed the band for weakness because of the line *"To thee I dedicate this photograph / I'll even sign it love to you, again"*. in 'Goin' Through The Motions', but the Barton assertion that the Cult of yore would never have waxed so soppy was up the creek in the extreme, since the *"again"* part was a reference to the fact that the line was lifted intact from 'Stairway To The Stars' off that very first BOC album. Poor heroes — might as well offer a votive fire to Hermes to ward off the dread contagion of criticism. They made amends.

'SOME ENCHANTED EVENING' (CBS 86074) October 1978.

Determined to get the live platter scam right this time, the group veered from excess to restraint with a single album that included a somewhat unproductive version of their greatest hit ('Reaper'), and two right-on covers that showed their roots.

'Kick Out The Jams' was a bamalamadingdong evocation of the MC5 cerebrosavage classic replete with plenty Buck Dharma amp bumping, while 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place' charged Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil's urban angst commentary with a mock ferocity that relied heavily (and I do mean *heavily*) on the Animals' version for inspiration. A meaty, physical return.



'MIRRORS' (CBS 86087) August 1979.

This is the most reviled BOC LP ever, even by the band themselves. In the future it might prove a fruitful ground for re-evaluation, like The Doors' derided 'Soft Parade' or 'Satanic Majesties' by The Stones. It's produced by Cheap Trick / Molly Hatchet AOR king Tom Werman, and was a definite shift away from the military / mythic imagery that usually concerned the band.

The title track was pure Keith Richards raunch with a chorus vocal by Ellen Foley and Genya Ravan that aimed right for the crotch. Still, the lyrics were as obscure as ever, delineating the negative space with a frame and the deadly sin of vanity.

Using Michael Moorcock as lyric hack on 'The Great Sun Jester' was a mistake; sci-fi books ain't



hard rock hooks. The group have said the LP should be relegated to the realm of Frisbees, castigating themselves for trying too hard to churn out hit 45s, but one feels they wouldn't be as harsh if any of the tracks had *actually* dented the charts. Cynics?

BOC have always had that duality in them: Beginning as a lampoon of Black Sabbath, they found that the fans weren't buying the joke, they were buying the Xerox. So their whole career has, in effect, been a comment upon itself. "And the joke's on you . . .", they once sung. *Until* Sandy Pearlman began managing the real Black Sabs!

'CULTOSAURUS ERECTUS' (CBS 86120) July 1980.

Last year saw the Cult keeping the laffs to the cover, imaginary paleontology and all. With Pearlman managing the real Sabs, the 2 bands began sharing Brit producer Martin Birch. The result was unbridled HEAVY METAL!!

Moorcock emerged again on 'Black Blade', a sword 'n' sorcery soundtrack, while 'Lips In The Hills' was a trash horror flick and 'Unknown Tongue' was sheer teensex and hot blood of the premier menstrual flush. The telling change was 'The Marshall Plan', equated to a TV segmenter about one youth's discovery of the power of the electric guitar. Brilliant bull!



'FIRE OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN' (CBS 85137) June 1981.

With solo projects promised, including the long-awaited Lovecraftian *'Soft Doctrines Of Imaginos'* illuminati garble, Blue Oyster Cult have come almost to realising the concept they aimed for when the USA copies of *'Spectres'* credited them as merely 'Blue Oyster'. Music in the 'Heavy Metal' film, a hitsingle off this, their second Martin Birch produced LP, looking assured if they push the scurrilous 'Joan Crawford' (in which the evil star is portrayed as Vampirella), and all the old tell-tale Cult tricks . . .

'Fire' is another Patti Smith poem set to garish muzak, and there's even bloody Moorcock again on 'Veteran Of The Psychic Wars'. They've never been a common HM thudthud band, but they've actually brought more honour to the form than most in their constant use of humour, intellect and shock / schlock imagery. They show no signs of abating or weakening in their effect. Just the other week some bible belt bashers decided to start burning Cult albums.

Said Eric Bloom upon being told: "That's fine with me, as long as they buy 'em first. Our back catalogue could use a boost!"

Buy 'em — let the *stereo* do the burning!

SINGLES

Don't Fear The Reaper / Tattoo Vampire (CBS4483) July 1976

Don't Fear The Reaper / R U Ready 2 Rock — live versions (CBS6333) May 1978

I Love The Night / Nosferatu (CBS6514) Aug 1978

We Gotta Get Out Of This Place / Stairway To The Stars (CBS6909) Nov 1978

Mirrors / Lonely Teardrops (CBS7783) Aug 1979

In Thee / The Vigil (CBS8003) Oct 1979

Fallen Angel / Lips In The Hills (CBS8790) July 1980

Deadline / Monsters (CBS8986) Oct 1980



BLACKFOOT
Ricky Medlocke
pic by Robert Ellis

STEVIE NICKS

pic by Chris Walter / Photo Features Int.



IRON FILINGS

Maiden take time out from conquering the States to squash those rumours . . .

NEW YORK, NEW YORK . . . the last outpost of heavy metal mayhem? The idea seems unlikely in this city of roller skates, frozen yoghurt and ever-shifting trends but moving a few blocks to the East side, a familiar sound hits my ears.

Inside the unsavoury doors of the Palladium, I find Iron Maiden letting loose their inimitable storm of HM thunder and the Palladium's punters — who have, after all, seen it all before and some — are replying with more, much more, than a cursory nod.

Dare I say it? Iron Maiden, who have conquered Britain, captured Europe and elevated themselves to superstar status in Japan, are moving in strong on their last portion of unclaimed territory, the US of A and this, I must admit, is *not* hype.

With their second elpee standing surprisingly high at number 80 in the American Billboard charts, with encores following almost every set they've played as Stateside support band to Judas Priest, it appears that the 'Killers' tour has been something of a success.

"Killers," remarks Paul Di'anno rather dourly, "has been the right word for it."

Naturally, while the cat's away, the mice will play and the Maiden's case has been no exception. They've been out of Britain since the middle of March, the burden of touring putting an obvious strain on the five and on Di'anno's vocal chords in particular.

A number of cancelled gigs have led to all sorts of peculiar rumours, namely the idea that the band have been auditioning and will soon be sporting a new frontman due to Mr Di'anno, er, *overdoing* it a bit. How do they answer this one?

"Tell 'em it's a load of bollocks," retorts Di'anno who has thankfully replaced his frilly white stage-gear with some slightly more street-wise black threads. "Absolute bollocks!"

His answer is echoed both by the band's manager, Rod Smallwood and by bassist, Steve Harris. Harris has a philosophy regarding these matters:

"As soon as we're away from home, all these strange rumours start up, all these funny things about Rod (Smallwood) and me having total control and that." He winces at the mention of his supposed nickname, the Ayatollah and conversation, inevitably, strays onto the subject of Dennis Stratton's departure from Iron Maiden, one that has been well covered by now.

Harris wishes to make it totally and utterly clear that there isn't and never has been any ill-feeling towards Stratton who just didn't "fit in" with the musical direction of the band — his complaint is angled towards the media who immediately flocked to Dennis's aid and to the purveyors of the above 'rumours'.

"With everything that's happened," he insists, "nobody has asked us about *our* side of the story. They've listened to everyone and everything else but they never ever bother to ask us!" C'est la vie!

My personal opinion is that, since their first UK headline tour in the spring of last year, a lot of very big things have happened to the Maiden in a very short space of time and their essential, er, naivity — that is, the East End factor, which, let's face it, helped break down the barriers so much in the beginning — has hindered them in some ways.

Basically, Iron Maiden have had a tendency to speak before thinking — remember the Priest incident which has now been, fortunately, smoothed out? — although, claims Harris, they are *not* to blame for the latest incident.

On the letters page of *Sounds* August 1, an excerpt from the American magazine 'Hit Parader' has Harris saying and I quote: "We haven't become the biggest heavy metal band in England for nothing . . . all the old fart bands like Sabbath and Priest will tell you that they helped us along but honestly we make them sound like a bunch of old ladies when we get on stage." Well?

"Believe it or not," says Harris, "but I *didn't* say that. What would be the point? We *know* that it's pointless to slag off other bands in interviews. It doesn't help us!"

Apparently, the person who conducted the interview was *not* the person who was credited for writing the article and the matter is now being dealt with. But it still doesn't help the band's reputation.

Says Steve Harris: "People read these things and they *believe* them and I for one am heartily sick of explaining to our fans, say at the Marquee, that we haven't said this or that and that we haven't grown huge egos!"

He would also like to expose the 'myth' that Iron Maiden have made the big time in the space of two years.

"Everyone seems to forget that Maiden were going for ages before we got a deal. We must have had fifteen line-up changes before we signed with EMI because people either weren't musically right for the band or because they hadn't the commitment. I mean, how many people realise that Thunderstick used to be our drummer?"

AN ARGUMENT ensues as to exactly how many line-up changes the band *has* seen and I decide it's time to move on to happier matters. So how do the Maiden like America?

"We don't!"

What? What's wrong with it?

"The food! The people!"

The people?

"Well, some of 'em . . ."

Fortunately, this feeling is not reciprocated. At an in-store signing in New York's Brooklyn, Iron Maiden are positively *bombarded* by album / poster / bared flesh in an orgy of autograph hunting and although your average US headbanger bears little relation to his UK brother — tall and tanned and, what's more, they don't headbang! — the devotion is just the same.

A guy in the record store put it into words for me: "We've been waiting a long time for this. I know people don't usually associate New York with heavy metal but there are thousands of HM fans and they've been longing for the opportunity to see British bands like Judas Preist and this lot."

His favourite HM combo?

"Iron Maiden!"

Naturally . . .

After America, Iron Maiden return to Britain to concentrate on their third album, a project which they admit has been rather neglected due to the touring schedules — "you see, we couldn't possibly have auditioned a new singer because we haven't even had time to get any new material together properly!" — before repeating the whole circus!

But just in case any of you *Kerrang* readers feel that you may have slipped momentarily, from the minds of the Maiden, here is proof to the contrary.

Late on a Friday afternoon, I announce my departure. Iron Maiden are having their photos taken for the umpteenth time in the plush offices of a NY radio station and Paul Di'anno turns to me, wearily.

"Are you off back to Britain then? God, I wish I was coming with you . . ."

ROBBI MILLAR



pic by Robert Ellis

pic by Simon Fowler





—MUSIC FRO



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THE ALBUM FE
O FORTUNA FROM "CAR
AND OTH



VENOM from left: Mantas, Abaddon and Chronos (it says here).

MAKIN' SATAN

CORRECT ME if I'm wrong but I do believe it was that well known heavy metal entrepreneur Malcolm McLaren who gave 'Don't let the public see the band' as one of his rules of thumb. Venom, the Newcastle variety, aren't exactly the Sex Pistols but judging by their deliberate non-ongoing gig policy they go along with the general idea.

Several mentions in *Sounds* and *Kerrang* courtesy of Baron Barton, the release of their Neat double 'A' side 'In League With Satan'/'Live Like An Angel' and that's been it for close on a year. Original vampire vocalist Clive has been given the boot and the back of the single lists the Venoms as a trio comprising guitarist Mantas, drummer Abaddon and bass player-vocalist Chronos.

Being a fairly sharp sort of bloke I realise that these are probably not the names the lads were born with, especially as both songs are credited on the record label to the more mundane 'Lant/Dunn/Bray'. Knowing the baby-faced bassman from his days at Impulse Studios (aka Neat HQ) as tape boy, when he called himself the slightly less ludicrous 'Conrad', and having to ask for 'Geoff' when I ring up Mantas to fix up the interview, also tends to give the game away a bit.

On arrival at their gear-crammed rehearsal room in a deserted office building by Newcastle's Quayside, it's disappointing to find that the aspiring trio of demons are dressed in jeans and tee shirts. Not a gun belt, cauldron or book of spells in sight.

But wait a minute! This isn't right. Why are Venom rehearsing when they don't actually play live?

"We do! We do!" gibbers Conrad-oops-'Chronos'.

When?

"Wait and see," offers Abaddon.

It turns out that what Venom have in mind is a 'super-gig', at somewhere like a Mayfair with all the effects and the PA power of the big boys but further over the top. They've been rehearsing it for months. Abaddon explains why.

"It just takes more rehearsal than the average band because more goes into a gig. The average band can go and play in the pub down the road, go down good, bad or indifferent, get their money and go home. It's different for us."

"That's why this gig has been so put off," continues Mantas, stroking his moustache like he's making sure it's still there. "We've had to buy two gigs worth of bombs to test how close we can stand to them."

But isn't this a trifle excessive? Shouldn't you be doing the spade work, paying your dues and all that? You could fall flat y'now. What if the people don't come?

"You can either be well known and have people like you. Or, you can create the interest in people's minds that maybe it's going to be the biggest thing they've seen," theorises Abby.

"If we were doing a gig you'd be there, right? If Diamond Head were playing a gig you wouldn't be."

THIS, it must be admitted, is true. But it does seem a bit on the naive side to assume that rehearsing is all it takes to be the grossest thing since sliced bread. Money, as they admit, is tight and Venom don't have the managerial muscle/bank balance of a Bill Aucoin, the way Kiss had. But they aren't going to be talked out of this.

"If you can think of every cliche," advises Abaddon, "that's us. Everybody says 'Not another over the top kerrang band.' But we are! We are every cliche. The loud, the fast, the bombs, the black magic . . ."

Ah yes, the black magic . . .

"I know you think we're meddling in it," interrupts the drummer. "But we're not. We're just writing songs. 'I'm in league with Satan, yeah yeah.'"

"If it came to the bit where this bloke with hairs all over him was going to jump up and say 'Urgh!! You're taking the mickey out of me! I'm going to kill yers' we'd be all right because we're singing on his side!" suggests Chronos brightly.

The Neat single is a pompous piece of horrifying power plod with vocals that sound like Chronos is being strangled by wire netting wrapped around a rugby player's jock strap.

There can't be any other band in the world who sound like that. So it's a pity the name isn't more unique. As seen in issue one of this august journal there's another heavy band strutting their stuff under the handle of Venom, a gang of Mancunian Sweet-lookalikes. So what are the Geordie boys going to do about it?

(All, like a pack of baying hyenas): "We're gonna punch their hedes off! Write that down!"

Sure. But there are five of them, of course.

Chronos: "So what? You *seen* them?"

IAN RAVENDALE

RAVEN LUNATICS

"WE DID this gig for the Hell's Angels once. Ended up playing 'Born To Be Wild' five times. Or else!"

Raven's vocalist/bassman John Gallagher chortles to himself as he and his guitarist brother Mark recount a bit of hairy dues paying. Still only in their early twenties, Raven had been around the Newcastle heavy scene for a good five years before settling on the classic power trio format with the recruitment of Skinsman Rob Hunter and releasing 'Don't Want Your Money' on the independent Neat label last year. So, they've seen a bit.

"We had this drummer before Rob," carries on Mark, taking up the story. "He was a right blabbermouth and he'd got talking to these Hell's Angels. They told him he could join, which he thought was great. And then asked him if we'd do the gig. He couldn't really refuse or they'd have filled him in. We were a bit dubious but he convinced us it'd be well organised.

"Got there and all there was was a field with a small generator and a bunch of Hell's Angels with booze! It started to rain at the end but they still wouldn't let us go. I had to fake an electric shock to get out of it. I was writhing around on the floor and this bunch of Angels came up, banging their fists together, saying 'Ya gonna play?!?' 'But he's had an electric shock!' 'What's that got ta dee with it? Play! Born To Be Wild!'"

As it happens, 'Born To Be Wild' would be an ideal theme tune for Raven. Over the top at going over the top, they throw themselves and their equipment around stages like a wrecking crew whose latest assignment is a music shop. Goes down a storm and fine when it's the band's own gear but a bit tricky when otherwise.

Like when the trio supported Ozzy Osbourne's Blizzard of Oz and Budgie at Newcastle Mayfair and John got into the spirit of the occasion.

"I was throwing water into the audience and some went into one of the monitors and burnt it out. Then I threw my guitar at Budgie's drum kit ..."

"Another monitor fell into the crowd," takes over Mark. "Just little things like that y'kna? It was a really good gig. The road crew weren't very happy, mind ..."

"There were five monitors along the front," proceeds John gleefully. "Next gig there was one!"

"The PA company had learned their lesson after we destroyed their equipment," assesses Mark proudly. Surprisingly, da boys have never had to cough up for any of their journeys into carnage. "I've got this great address!" explains Mark. "Sure! Just send us the bill!"

THE QUESTION that's raised out of all this mayhem making is, of course, how much is real and how much is show? As the Gallaghers hop around like nuclear kangaroos, even at sound-checks chances are that the enthusiasm is gen enough. But could they actually stop mid-smash if they wanted to? Mark and John reply in unison.

"Sometimes! Not always!"

"John's the worst!" sneaks Mark.

"It's frustration," counters the bass player. "If the crowd aren't interested that's when things really get broken. And when we do it we *really* do it. Some bands like Saxon smash guitars against dry ice and the roadies sneak a carpet underneath to make sure nothing gets damaged."

Raven got the Newcastle Mayfair gig after Ozzy Osbourne had heard 'Don't Want Your Money' at a radio station while waiting to be interviewed. The Oz liked it more than somewhat and eventually tracked the band down, insisting they were added to the bill. Jet, Blizzard's label, were instructed to watch and opportunity looked all set to knock for the mop tops. Then, as John explains ...

"Ozzy and Jet really liked the band at the Mayfair. The next gig was at Hammersmith and Jet were going 'Great lads! See you later on!' before it. They seemed really interested.

"Played the gig. We were told that the audience at Hammersmith might be a bit funny. A couple of kids stood up when we played the single. But otherwise, a pretty cold reception. *We* thought we played a blinder. But after that, the record company stayed away from us, never approached us. We never saw much of anyone. They just pretended we didn't exist."

"As far as we're concerned," snorts Mark, "if they don't want to know, stuff 'em. Blizzard still liked us apparently. But then they vanished and reappeared later with a new line-up. So maybe they were having problems themselves," suggests John.

'DON'T WANT Your Money' was probably the best single Neat put out. Lunatic frenzy with a built-in sense of fun and a John-vocal so shrill that every bat within a quarter of a mile radius stands a good chance of being deafened every time it's played. Lots of airplay but no offers from any of the major record companies.

"It came out just as the 'New Wave Of British Heavy Metal' thing was starting to fizzle out as far as record companies were concerned," states Mark, matter-of-factly.

"Also, Fist and White Spirit, the other Neat bands signed after the Tygers of Pan Tang' success, hadn't done anything. So being on Neat may have worked against us. Nothing against Fist or Spirit, mind. They're good bands if you like that sort of thing ..."

So, an album has been recorded at Impulse Studios, Wallsend, aka Neat HQ. This was to emerge on Neat, but at the moment this doesn't seem too likely if the stories about Neat's alleged problems have any foundation. Raven have been taken under the wing (cough) of a London management who are trying to arrange the release of 'Rock Till You Drop' via a major label.

So what do you think about all this then, Rob? That evil glint must mean something.

"If we had the finances of a record company behind us we could destroy everything at practically every gig ..."

IAN RAVENDALE



RAVEN: born to be wild.

pic by Rik Walton


AC/DC
pic by Andre Csillag



GIRLSCHOOL

pic by Simon Porter

DIAMOND HEAD



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Nice boys DO play rock and roll



TREVOR RABIN: "I have no vices." pic by Chris Walter

SO THIS is what becomes of boys who stand in front of a mirror with a broomstick during their formative years and impersonate Cliff Richard.

Twenty-six years old and with all his own teeth, the man standing before me looks like a healthfood cafe waiter let loose in a rock and roll clothes shop. Bright-eyed and satin-tailed.

My search may have taken me deep into the bowels of the Valley (actually a very nice big house half-an-hour's drive from Los Angeles rented from Manfred Mann's Chris Thompson) but it was worth it to find him. The first wholesome guitar hero: Trevor Rabin.

"I look respectable? Jeez, I just had a heavy session," Trevor protests and passes round the cold beers and yoghurt balls (some cruel and unusual candy). "I think one of the secrets for me staying sane is I'm straight. I have no vices. Well, only older men."

Oh? Well, what he means is that other than the youthful Simon Phillips, the venerable Jack Bruce, Ray Davies, Chris Thompson, Rabbit and Manfred Mann had a hand in Rabin's last — and — best album, 'Wolf'.

The record's never even been released in America wouldn't you know. Chrysalis dropped him (so did Blue Chip Music, the South African production company "who seemed not exactly to get on with me", hard as that might seem) just as the album was due to come out.

But life is full of little ironies, and no sooner had one label assigned him to the gutter when another far more prestigious one, Geffen Records (they snapped up Elton John, John Lennon, Sammy Hagar and other established stars) lifted him out onto its pedestal.

Salvation came once again in the form of older men: Trevor was in London ostensibly to write songs and play lead guitar for a band that Rick Wakeman and Carl Palmer were planning on getting together, and when that didn't happen and he stuck behind to write by himself, the right people got to hear him and signed him up.

"I was so excited — it's such a hot label at the moment," Rabin enthuses. "I don't feel I could be in much better hands."

Part of the deal involves putting a band together (the blond musician lurking in the kitchen is a possible candidate, though nothing's final yet), old pros or new musicians, "I don't care so long as they fit in with what I want to do," and taking them out on the road. Starting with Britain and going on to Japan, the Far East and Australia (a mini Police tour as his manager calls it) after the first Geffen album has been released this August. Right now Rabin is laying down demos in the house's garage-studio.

"I do that by myself, I play all the instruments, which gives me a lot of freedom to try anything I want, and then we do it with the band" — 15 songs so far till he gets to about 35 or 40 "and then we choose the ten songs that go on the album. The others go into the publishing company.

"It will be a departure from the first album, but more 'Wolf' than anything else. It's going to be a rock album and a rock band. Not the Trevor Rabin band, a *whole* band. So it'll probably have a little more excitement."

Though not many people have picked on Trevor for his playing abilities, "excitement" wasn't a word they did use very often. The album before 'Wolf', for example, was described as being too technical, too emotionless. It didn't go unnoticed by Rabin either.

"I think production wise everything was perfect, all the meters are right and there's no distortion — but listening to it back I don't get the same kind of emotion as I did from the third album. If it had just been rawer. I went into 'Wolf' deciding to make a record that was more passionate, more alive, more down to earth.

"I think the musicians on that last album are better than any I've ever used before." As for their age, "They had to play like youngsters though because it's different music. Manfred Mann came in and his glasses were misting up! He was really enjoying himself. I prefer older men!" Trevor returned the favour by working on Mann's last and current albums.

"I hate it when I'm called a virtuoso musician because it's no big deal. I didn't play all the instruments on the first LP just because I wanted to be known as a virtuoso — it just seemed to happen that way. If there had been guys around I was really into, I would have used them. But at the time of the first album, I had just left a band in South Africa — Rabbit — and I just felt it was time to do a solo thing. By the time the second album came along I was really wanting to get back in a band. We did a tour two years ago and that's when I started getting the adrenalin back and we decided to get guys in to do the album. Now it's one step further still and we're putting the band together."

Trevor put Rabbit together when he was just 14. At that time it was called Conglomeration, a band that played "bar mitzvahs and weddings and restaurants and things till we were promoted to doing socials".

Then tablecloths and beads came along, and Trevor joined a band called Freedom's Children, "a political anti-Government band. This was the hippy days. I'll show you a picture you won't believe. My hair's down there and I weighed about thirty pounds and was doing peace signs. That lasted about a year. I was 19 then and the drummer was 26, so I was playing with old men. The story of my life!"

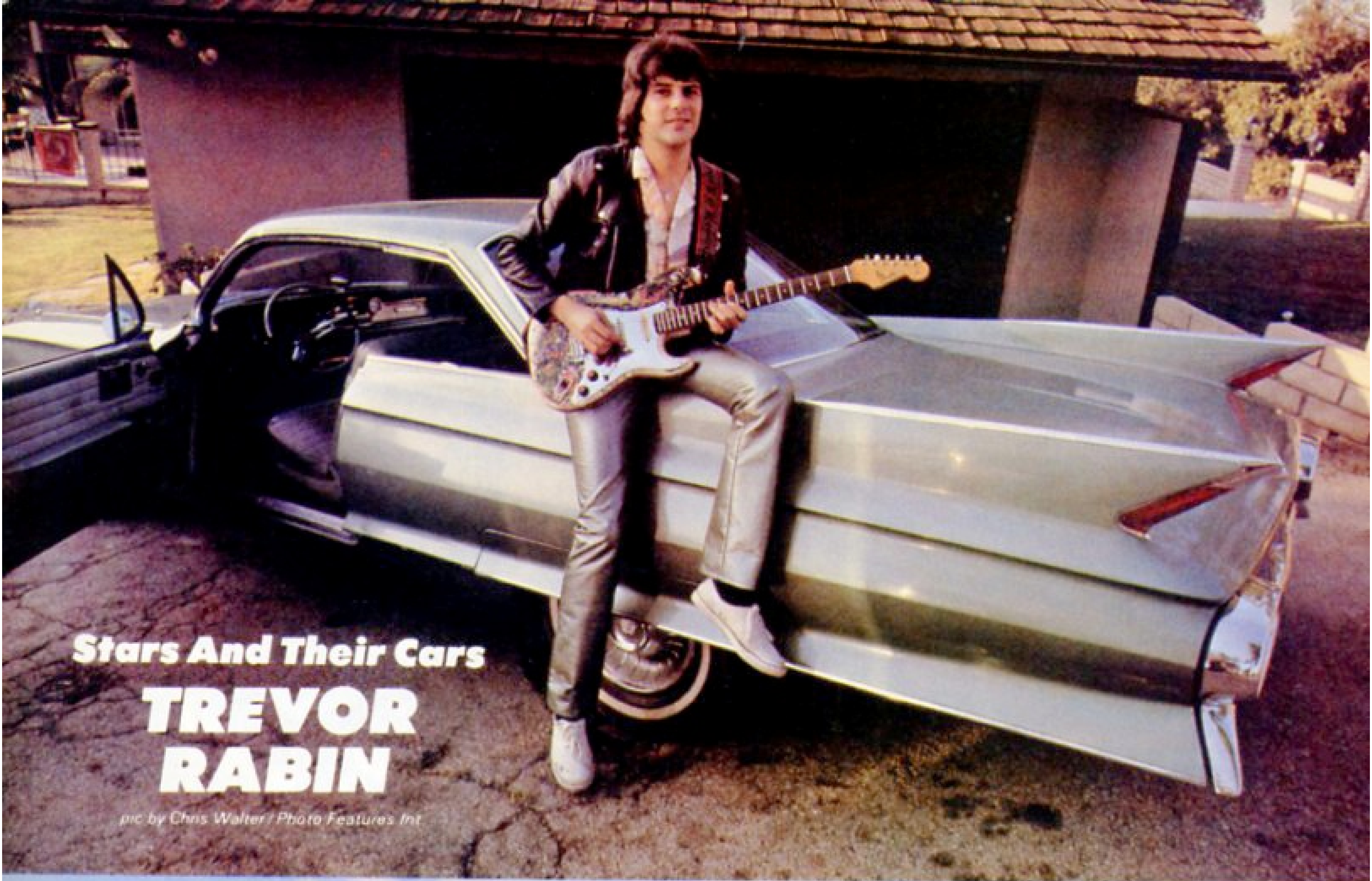
From protest songs — which would have been dangerous in South Africa at the time if they'd been more successful than they were — they took up the hems of their jeans Roller-style ("it was more jungle leopard skins actually") and got shrieked at by little girls.

"Rabbit was a teen band. The funny thing was that the records were sort of melodic ballady sort of things and the live show was just a screaming heavy rock band with these screaming 14-year-old girls in front of the stage. Once we left the club scene and started getting big though, the headbangers stopped coming. We had this big Kiss type of production — balloons dropping, dry ice, strings onstage, the whole thing. Basically I had enough of it eventually and there were a couple of internal problems."

So Duncan Faure left to become a Bay City Roller and Trevor left to come to England, do some producing and get a solo deal with Chrysalis.

"I haven't toured that much, but there's nothing I like better than being on the road. We did one British tour" — with Steve Hillage — "and I actually enjoyed that, because in the audience there were a handful of headbangers there to see me, and the rest was sort of woolly hats and —" he woggles his eyes like an acid-head. "Quite a lot of the shows the band would start up and it would be POWWW! Bad trip maan!"

SYLVIE SIMMONS



Stars And Their Cars

TREVOR RABIN

pic by Chris Walter / Photo Features Int



Stars And Their Cars

DEF LEPPARD

pic by Ross Halfin

SCORPIONS

pic by Robert Ellis



"Young Americans listen when I say / There's people putting us down / I know they say we've gone lazy / To tell you the truth we've seen better days / Don't need no fast buck . . . We need some straight-talking hard-working sons of a guns . . ."

REAGAN's in the White House, John Wayne's in his heaven and smiling down on New Jersey this sunny morning at an ungodly hour most rock musicians only hear rumours about. Styx are up and ready to meet the Press one-on-one. A whole new game.

If this were *It's A Knockout* Styx'd be at the top of a platinum pole with critics at the bottom throwing heavy objects at them trying to knock them off. So far the band's only revenge has been to stop sending review copies of their albums (usually a good seller in the second-hand stores) to writers. As the telegram said with a gloat, *"The band doesn't enjoy being torn apart in print and we're not going to help them do it".*

The reason for the current truce is to clear up misconceptions and clarify the message in their music. Yes you read right. Message.

"I got faith in our generation / Let's stick together and futurise our attitudes(?!) / With determination we can challenge the schemers / If we take pride Then we'll be rocking in Paradise"

There are no fans in the hotel lobby. A surprise considering the whooping and general Styxmania at the Spectrum in Philadelphia the night before. Just a bunch of kids with gold chains and medallions that gleam like the Osmonds' teeth, wearing tiny U.S. flags — some kind of Young Masons convention tailor-made for the pro-America sentiments in Styx's new songs. Oh, and the old ones.'

Songs like 'Suite Madam Blue' which critics assumed, if anything, was about Dennis de Young's taste in women, actually turns out to be about the way the States used to be before we'd even heard of Arab oil. A preoccupation they've had since being struck with Bicentennial Fever (distant relative of Silver Jubilee madness), not to mention Mrs de Young pointing out that a married



CAN STYX SAVE

man shouldn't really be writing songs about "shacking up".

Everything on this tour has underlined the "message", down to the radio ads — as meticulously outlined as a political campaign: AMERICAN ROCK AND ROLL! Dramatic pause. HOW MUCH FOG AND HOW MANY FLASHPOTS MUST IT HIDE BEHIND? HOW LONG WILL IT BE BEFORE IT HAS SOMETHING TO SAY?

"I think it's just saying that we're proud of being American and saying that anyone who says America is going down the tubes is probably going down the tubes themselves. Because we *believe* in the people of our country.

Tommy Shaw, one of the two guitarists and three vocalists — if this were Cheap Trick he'd be the "cute one" — looks me straight in the eye. "We believe that we can make things work."

The hotel room set aside for interviews is high above New Jersey — no copies of *Playboy*, or more to the point *Financial Times* scattered about to give you an idea of this band's personalities. Just a few Polaroid snapshots of a baby cow born on Tommy's farm in the Midwest (next-door to Ted Nugent's, but so far he's been spared the sight of the Gonz in camoflauge stalking his cattle) where he returns pretty much once a week as part of the band's scheme to stay sane in rock and roll.

"You have to take care of your mind out there because there are people everywhere who would take it away from you," Shaw says mysteriously, "and you can go nuts. We give a lot. We give big. But it's never enough and you can only do what you can. Fortunately I enjoy what I do, so it's no big sacrifice to me. To have the opportunity to work and let it go by the wayside, that's guaranteeing misery in about fifty years. Rock is fickle."

Like the proverbial Paradise Theater it's here one minute, gone the next.

THE CURRENT album and tour (multi-platinum and America's largest respectively) tell the tale of the rise and fall of the Art-deco theatre in Chicago (home-town for all but Shaw) whose slogan when it was built in 1928 was NOT FOR TODAY BUT FOR ALL TIME. Television signalled its decline, and in 1958 in came the demolition squad. Dennis de Young saw the news in the Chicago Star and figured it could be used as "a symbol of how America is slipping, the trouble we're in and how we can straighten things out if we work hard enough."

continues next page



AMERICA? by SYLVIE SIMMONS

continued from page 35

He took the idea to the rest of the band, who were "very sceptical — this seemed a little bit heavy an idea for people to relate to," says Shaw. "But in fact it's been a real easy idea and everyone has related to it; everyone's figures out what it is."

At least enough of everyone to make it Top Ten in the States the second week it was out, and to go apeshit at all their sold-out concerts along this 96 city tour. The timing is certainly right here to stir up patriotic fever, and as far as Shaw is concerned he sees nothing potentially dangerous in encouraging political fervour without mentioning their platform.

"I don't think it's for a band to offer solutions," he reckons. "Because we're just citizens. We're not politicians, we're not running for office. We're artists and we're just stating the way that we feel. The band is concerned with right now and is very aware of what's going on right now.

"It used to be corny to wave the American flag. I suppose in some ways I still wouldn't want to be walking around with an American flag suit on. But there have been times when I've felt like waving one — when the hostage situation was at its peak and when our President got shot. Crisis tends to make not only Americans but people from any country come together. It brings out a sense of nationalism.

"I don't know that there's one common solution for everything. What we come from is working-class homes and families, so the one thing that we do know for sure is that hard work and pride in your work goes a long way. And I know that there's something gone wrong since I've been growing up. Like it used to be a joke when you saw something that said 'Made in Japan', and now it's a signature of quality. And something that says 'Made in America' makes you look at it kind of like, 'ooh, I don't know'."

"What's funny," he continues, after a brief dig at the unions, "is that 'Best Of Times' was fairly relevant when Dennis wrote it, but it just seems even more topical now, which is lucky for us. I thought it was the nicest ballad he'd ever written — and I'm not that much of a ballad fan myself — because as soon as he played it I got a real lump in my throat at the part where it says, *'people lock their doors and hide inside'*, like the end of Paradise. I can really relate to that. The times when you could walk at night in the park or leave your front gate open . . . that upset me.

"And the Paradise thing just seemed to work — we got away with it, which is real rewarding, because all of us love the theatre, like Broadway. I like all that it encompasses. I love being taken in, being drawn into it and believing everything, and the technical aspect — being able to do so much with so little. We're trying to go further and further into that — not to hang ourselves by the neck; we'd still like to keep ana audience — but I think we'd like to get even more daring and progressive and involve a little bit of a risk.

"Because the Paradise Theater concept could have very well gone right down the toilet if the people hadn't related to it and the record hadn't been strong and the crew and the whole machine out on the road hadn't been as well-tuned as it is. If everything hadn't worked, we'd be broke now. But it was a risk and everyone believed in it and worked hard enough at it.

"We very seldom take days off because there's always something to be done — radio ideas, videos, commercials, we do all those things ourselves. So if it floats we get the credit and if it stinks then we get the blame. We're the biggest band in the country. But don't tell anyone — we're trying to keep it quiet."

OTHER THAN the good old American Work Ethic, Styx got to its current multi-platinum status with a sound custom-made for American stadiums. A combination of Midwestern heavy metal and Euro progressive rock with lush majestic build-ups and grandiose climaxes.

Somewhere between Ted Nugent and Queen with a stop off at Barry Manilow. The sound came from their early dabblings in music — playing cover versions of Deep Purple, Yes, ELP and Crosby Stills and Nash (!) on the one hand, to late-arrival Shaw's black soul and whiter-than-white folk influences.

"We've always been different personalities (the zany one, the teen idol, the heavy metal monster, the paternal one etc) and I remember in the old days when we couldn't afford to buy clothes we would look like we didn't know whether we were going to be Jackson Browne or Kiss. I'd be out there in faded jeans and earth shoes, and J.Y. (guitarist James Young) would have on his Ming the Merciless outfit with platform silver boots.

"We were all over the place. We couldn't agree, so nothing emerged as a common image for the band. We used to fight about it. Dennis was going to dress in a pink suit if he wanted to and if you didn't like it, tough shit. We always were trying to force our tastes on one another. Finally one day it just all started to work and look and sound the way it does now, and we didn't have to fight about it anymore. Osmosis finally got the best of us."

Shaw didn't join the band till after it had its belated hit (two years after release) with the ballad 'Lady'.

"They were in a strange position then. They'd just dropped their old management and dropped a bomb in front of their old record company (Wooden Nickel Records; the band gave up a sizeable amount of royalties to get out of that contract and sign with A&M) so it was a gamble. But it was also like a desperate move when I came in. Without all those things behind you you can be the best band in the world, but it's like a tree falling in the forest when there's no-one around to hear it."

As far as Styx were concerned, they were the best. "We always won when we played. We were ready in our own minds then to be headlining major halls, but we were opening for Kiss and Aerosmith and things like that, until we finally couldn't get jobs anymore.

"It was around the time of 'Grand Illusion' that we couldn't get work. We didn't have a track record as headliners and we couldn't get anyone else to let us play onstage with them because we were kicking their asses so bad. Styx as a performing band — not that I'm trying to put anyone else down, but I'm here every night and I know what goes into it — Styx is just a much better performing band than most."

SO THEY spent quite a while driving out of town to play in "a station wagon with a luggage rack on the roof, and we always seemed to get gigs in the mountains in the east and south-east and we'd have to drive up and down these mountain passes, stopping the car to let Johnny (Panozzo — his twin brother Chuck plays bass to his drums) get out and throw up. It was very glamorous. It wasn't quite the same as having your own aeroplane, but we'd still go out there and kick ass. We were always real determined that nothing was going to get us down and stop us getting on."

'Grand Illusion' was the breakthrough album with the classic Styx single 'Come Sail Away', the song that perfectly combines all their elements of wimp-rock ballad, gut-wrenching sound and grandiose crescendos. It was the band's first triple-platinum album, a feat repeated by all subsequent LPs.

'Paradise Theater' has been the quickest seller of the lot, slamming Springsteen off the top of the American radio playlists the second it came out. The fact that the press doesn't give them half the serious attention they give Bruce leaves them pretty much unfazed. Their lack of spontaneity?

"In any kind of theatre it's got to appear spontaneous and the audience should never know if it is or not. You have to make it look like the first time because you're doing it for those people who are sitting out there for the first time. I don't think we've ever had any problem looking sincere."

Their meticulous profession and cleaner-than-clean-cut looks?

"Each of the guys in the band does what he does best and does it sincerely. I think there's a lot to like about the band because there are a lot of different things going on — from messages to tight pants. I don't expect anyone to like us for one particular reason, like our looks."

And their conservatism?

"We say what we believe in. If I spent all my time analysing why people dislike what we do, I may as well go out there and take sandpaper to my hands or put needles in my eyes. There's too many good, positive things to be concentrating on, and I don't know whose music stands up under real close analysis. I don't know that music is intended to be scrutinised that much, although we certainly try to write ours so it will at least stand up to our own scrutiny."

Even before heading for the Autumn tour of Europe (apparently they swore never to return after the last visit because the toilet paper was too rough) they're planning the next extravaganza, apparently a half-live half-studio concept album, "ultra-progressive as far as rock has gone."

And their way of beating the largest tour in American rock history is to get smaller.

"Something that's more of a gamble and a lot more theatrical. Not in the giant echo palaces we play now, but in a real theatre with good acoustics with us having total control, playing there a couple of weeks at a time.

"Right now I'm just enjoying the creative end of it. Then we'll get together with our managers and everything and try to work it out so everyone won't have to go broke. You could easily come out of it owing money at the end of it.

"See we're not so complacent," Shaw assures me.

"We may not be the world's greatest trendsetters but we're doing something."

I believe you. You've got an honest face.



James Young (left) and Tommy Shaw: pic by Ross Halfin.



ONE SONG, ONE RIFF, ONE GARDEN OF EDEN

***Iron Butterfly* by BARRY LAZELL**

ONE ASPECT of rock music which has always fascinated me is the phenomenon of one-song bands: outfits which got it all just right on one solitary recording and managed nothing but faceless mediocrity with just about everything else they ever attempted.

When they compile the catalogue of great 20th Century masterpieces of junk rock art, Iron Butterfly's 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida' will be right in there alongside 'Monster Mash', 'Silver Machine' and 'Bohemian Rhapsody'.

But unlike Hawkwind or Queen, Iron Butterfly were just about the ultimate one-hit wonders.

The band was formed in San Diego, California, in 1967, comprising leader Doug Ingle (vocals and organ); Ron Bushy (drums); and Jerry Penrod, Danny Weiss, and Darryl Deloach on guitars and bass. They made only one album titled 'Heavy' and a couple of contributions to the biker film 'The Savage Seven' (alongside Cream's 'Anyone For Tennis'), before the latter three members departed. Amusingly, the sleeve of the second album 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida' pretends they never existed at all, but places newcomers Erik Brann (guitar) and Lee Dorman (bass) as having been with Ingle and Bushy from the beginning. In the event, Brann only stayed on for this and the follow-up album 'Ball' after which he was replaced jointly on guitars by Larry Reinhardt and Mike Pinera for 'Iron Butterfly Live' and 'Metamorphosis'.

Following this, the whole band broke up for a couple of years, but in 1974 the name was resurrected for a completely new line-up which featured a returned Erik Brann with Ron Bushy, plus Howard Reitzes (organ) and Phil Kramer (bass).

The earlier recordings had all been made for Atlantic, but the new band went to MCA to cut the albums 'Scorching Beauty' and 'Sun and Steel' (the latter featuring Bill DeMartines on keybords.) They needn't have bothered really, because nobody bought these albums, and when the band appeared live, all the audiences wanted to hear was you guessed it.

The fact is, virtually the whole Iron Butterfly record collection is completely disposable. Sure they were heavy, but the 'butterfly' side of things seemed to mostly manifest itself as an absurdly po-faced sense of seriousness and supposedly lyrical 'relevance'. Fine if you were on the trip with them; if not, you were more likely to convulse than be deeply moved.

WHICH BRINGS us neatly back to 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida', if only because lyrically it was probably the dumbest thing they ever did. The title is actually a bozospeak adaptation of 'In The Garden Of Eden', though I've never quite figured out why Doug Ingle, who wrote the thing, should have felt the need to transpose a perfectly serviceable English phrase into a close neanderthal equivalent.

Maybe he had a heavy cold the first time he sang it and retained the pronunciation as an in-joke. Maybe (and more likely) he liked the way it looked like a mystical incantation when written out phonetically.

The remainder of the lyric, and there isn't much of it, merely intersperses repeats of the title phrase with lines like 'don't you know that I love you' and 'don't you know that I'll always be true'. There's even a bit of 'come walk with me and take my hand' stuff, to lend (supposedly) some 'significance' to the theme.

The song occupies one whole side of the album to which it is the title track, clocking in at some 17 minutes and 5 seconds total playing time. The other side of the album features five tracks of total droning inconsequence, with titles like 'My Mirage', 'Termination', and (this was 1968, remember) 'Flowers And Beads'.

The length angle was a big interest factor with the then-burgeoning FM underground rock stations in the States; this certainly wasn't the first time a song had filled a whole LP side (Love's 'Revelation' and Paul Butterfield's 'East-West' had gone before, to name but two), but the FM disc jockeys loved to be seen to be getting away from formula restrictions like three-minute pop songs, and they would gleefully seize upon something like this to wallow in their own hipness. Atlantic made a much edited version available for the less adventurous stations, and this was also released as a single, which went up to No. 30 in the American charts.

All the same, for every one person who bought the single, half-a-dozen went for the album after hearing 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida' in its full version. They certainly weren't just doing this out of curiosity; it was (and is) a fact that despite being basically a load of old tat as a song, the track has a definite hypnotic power, particularly through the long, heavy instrumental passages (I can't call them workouts, because everything is so tautly orchestrated — almost mechanically so — that there's no sense of improvisation about them) which occupy most of its length except at the beginning and end.

I've no doubt it was real wowie zowie land if you settled down to listen to it whilst well immersed in certain substances, and this may well be one of the reasons why virtually every rock fan in America bought a copy during 1968 or 1969, giving the album a whole year in the top 10 and more than two in the LP charts.

It sold like nothing except Beatles albums had previously, going well in excess of a million copies — more than most of the hit singles in the States during 1968. In Britain, where there was no hipper-than-thou media to give it exposure, sales were much more modest, however.

IF YOU'VE never heard 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida', let me try to give you some idea of its construction. Firstly, the whole thing is built around continuous deep, heavy 10-note riff played by organ and bass in unison, sometimes with guitar over the top. It ought to get exceedingly monotonous, but amazingly becomes quite hypnotic instead.

Ingle (I think — the sleeve gives no vocal credits) sings the dumb lyrics in an appropriately stiff, deadpan voice (sort of Bryan Ferry with lockjaw) before making way for a keyboard and guitar interplay. Brann's guitar is deeply fuzzed throughout, except upon occasions (mainly towards the end of the cut) when he makes it give screams like a parrot having its tail trodden on.

You get the impression he's soaked up quite a few Jimi Hendriz albums as he slops away inconclusively for a while on the wah-wah peddle while the others manfully continue to power away at the riff.

Virtually everything shuts down, instrument by instrument, towards the middle five minutes or so of the record, and we are then left with just Ron Bushy's drums and a couple of engineers. For people who were used to long improvisional solos by the likes of Ginger Baker at the time, this particular offering was more like a solo by a drum machine, owing most of its antecedents to Sandy Nelson's records like 'Let There Be Drums'.

Again, though — and probably because it was so predictable and syncopated — the solo was incredibly hypnotic. Those engineers I mentioned just now play a definite part here too, because the whole passage is slightly phased, and the drums also leap across the stereo from channel to channel when least expected.

When Ingle's organ comes back in, the whole thing gets very churchy as he plays some very cathedral-like runs around the ever-throbbing riff. The bass and guitar take up again, with Brann doing the affronted parrot bit, and then, towards the close of the track, they all hammer away at that riff in controlled mayhem, while we get a brief vocal refrain and then a neat shutdown at the end.

The whole thing is naive, and also dated in its stilted sense of self-importance, to metal-conscious ears of the 80s. Regardless, it was one of the first major heavy metal set-pieces, it wove an undeniable spell over a vast number of rock fans at the end of the sixties — including undoubtedly many who have moved on to create their own heavy spells on record a decade later — and there's no way you can't regard it as a rock classic.

I wouldn't suggest to WEA that they bother reissuing the original album, but 17 minutes by no means exceeds what has been pressed onto a 12-inch single, and the track would make excellent value issued in this form, with a couple of the band's less yawn-inducing shorter cuts on the flip.

A whole new generation is waiting to be hypnotised by that riff and drum solo.

And even if they never achieved anything else, the name Iron Butterfly was surely the direct inspiration for the name Led Zeppelin.

STRIKTLY FOR

GEOFF BARTON with another vintage selection from the whine-cellar



STARCASTLE
'Citadel'
(Epic 34935)

THE APPALLINGLY-NAMED American band Starcastle used to pride themselves on being Yes imitators and they were so adept at their musical Mike Yarwood impressions I always preferred them to the original.

Just one look at the cover and you know what to expect. On the front, a Brothers Hildebrandt painting of a glittering fairytale edifice towering proudly in the midst of an anomalous Alien landscape; on the reverse a picture of the group themselves.

A single gander at this nicely-composed band photo and you can't help but stifle a giggle. As well as having a fair supply of curly long hair and walrus moustaches, Starcastle contained at least two Tommy Shaw lookalikes — here, one wears a ludicrous ribbed white roll-neck sweater and pouts so naffly he makes Justin Hayward look like Lemmy.

As befits such a limp-wristed line-up, the music has about as much balls as Wimbledon's Centre Court in December. But for some inexplicable reason, I find it hugely entertaining.

Produced with loving care by Roy Thomas Baker, 'Citadel' is a thing of soaring, graceful, romantic beauty and a must for all keyboard fetishists. Unlike their inspirators Yes, Starcastle keep it simple and don't attempt to intellectualise or stray into the realms of 'art'. 'Shine On Brightly', 'Wings Of White' and 'Shadows Of A Song' are the musical equivalents to Tolkien's Rivendell, the perfect antidote for anyone suffering form kick-ass katatonia.

Rush fans would go a bundle on this LP methinks, especially the epic 'Change In Time' where Starcastle tell the tale of a civilisation threatened with extinction after unwisely plundering the bulk of their world's natural resources. *'Keepers of the planet / Have chosen to ignore / Her life support systems / As well as the ocean floor,'* go the lyrics.

A wimp-rock classic.



DETECTIVE
'Detective'
SwanSong SSK 59405)

AFTER TWO albums with early Seventies glamrockers Silverhead — the eponymous debut, re-reviewed last issue, and its 'Sixteen And Savaged' successor — Michael Des Barres went to ground in Los Angeles for a couple of years.

Finally, in 1977, he emerged with a new band and a new LP, both titled Detective, and a brand new look. Gone were the long hair, the mime artist pose and the phenomenally flared trousers. In their place: a neatly cropped barnet, a more casual stance and a satin suit with far more sensible strides.

Detective itself was formed in March 1975 and the original line-up ran: Des Barres (vocals), Michael Monarch (guitar, ex-of the original Steppenwolf), Bobby Pickett (bass, late of Sugarloaf) and John Hyde (drums). Just before the recording of the first album, the group were made up to a five piece by the arrival of Tony Kaye, a Yes member from way back when and founder of perhaps the greatest ER band of all time, Badger.

Of all people, Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page was responsible for Detective work finally appearing on vinyl. He saw them play in LA and immediately signed them to SwanSong — Zep's own label.

And 'Detective' really is as titanic a debut as you're ever likely to hear. LZ-influenced and sparked by Des Barres' cocky vocals and Monarch's ferocious guitar, the album ranges from the funky opener 'Recognition' to the literally explosive closer 'One More Heartache'. In the midst of these two lie such gems as the storming 'Ain't None Of Your Business', the gorgeous, grinding 'Grim Reaper' and a veritable feast of other fine tracks.

Sadly however, despite Page's sponsorship, Detective made few arrests and after a lacklustre follow-up LP 'It Takes One To Know One' floated up to that great heavy metal scrapheap in the sky. But spares are still available, and they're going cheap.



Michael Des Barres of Detective: pic by Chuck Pulin



MOXY
'Ridin' High'
(Power Exchange PXL 022)

MOXY WERE making music in Canada long before the term 'Maple Leaf Mayhem' came into common heavy metal usage and Paul Suter went Canuck crazy.

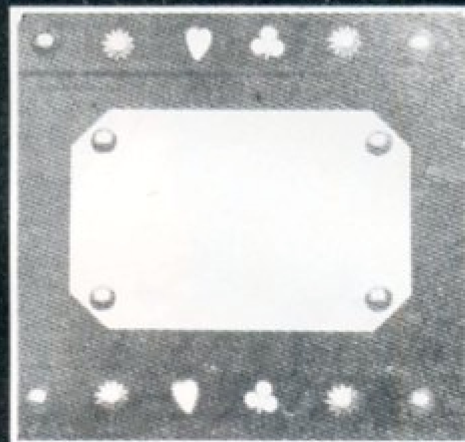
This mid-1977 album 'Ridin' High' is Moxy's third and best, following hard on the heels of the stunningly-titled 'Moxy' and 'Moxy II', both released in 1976.

A five piece, the membership roster included Buzz Shearman (vocals), Earl Johnson (guitar), Buddy Caine (guitar), Terry Juric (bass) and Bill Wade (drums). And if any of you are quickly reaching for the last issue of *Kerrang!* and turning to the feature on Loverboy, where their vocalist Mike Reno is described as being 'ex-Moxy', let me make it clear that he arrived towards the end of the band's career and was in no way involved with this, the 'classic' line-up.

With 'Ridin' High' Moxy became about as big as they were ever going to get. After the scabby sleeves of its predecessors, it was the first of the band's albums to benefit from decent record company packaging and also the first to gain nationwide British release — on, of all things, the disco-based Power Exchange label.

Produced by Eddie Leonetti and Jack 'Aerosmith' Douglas, the LP's whoop an' holler heaviness is utterly compulsive. Beginning (and ending, as it happens) with the semi-live 'Nothin' Comes Easy', Moxy make an extraordinary sound, one moment boogying lazily like Molly Hatchet, the next kicking up such a storm they could be AC/DC.

Vocalist Shearman has an excellent whisky-damaged voice, really coming into his own on side two with the title track (*'Ridin' haaagh!'* he rasps) and a moving, Zep-like missive by the name of 'Young Legs'. *'She had young legs / And soft skin / And a cold-cold heart'*, complains a rejected Buzz, valiantly but vainly trying to emulate Robert Plant's silver-throated scream. Marvellous.



STRAY DOG
'Stray Dog'
(Manticore K 43506)

LED BY unknown guitar hero Snuffy Walden, Stray Dog enjoyed a brief burst of popularity with two albums released in the early Seventies — this, their debut, and a follow-up entitled 'While You're Down There'.

The first, recorded while the band was a trio, is the best. Although issued on ELP's Manticore label and produced by self-styled 'sensitive artist' Greg Lake, you'd be wrong to assume it to be full of 'Tarkus' outtakes and 'Lucky Man'-style lyricism. Rather, it's a bloody-minded blues-based bomb-burst from beginning to end, with nary a hint of Emersonian excess to be found anywhere.

Walden's guitar work sounds lackadaisical, meandering, spontaneous and the album itself has a delightfully loose, one-take feel, as if the band suddenly found themselves in a studio one day and on the spur of the moment decided to make a record.

'Stray Dog' has as dynamic a beginning as you're ever likely to hear. 'Tramp (How It Is)' stretches to over seven minutes in length and kicks off with the deep, sonorous tones of a church organ, some drum crashes, a dose of pinging guitar and some well nigh unintelligible vocal chants.

The whole ridiculous recipe grows in volume and stature until a voice suddenly cries *'FASTEN YOUR SEEEAT BELTS!'* and we're off on a riotous road race of rampant, rubber-burning Hendrixism.

As well as pumping out those searing mega-licks, Walden also proves himself to be master of the tantalising taunt and ridiculous rap (*'Oooh — I gotta tell ya, livin' out of a suitcase makes a man feel damn sexy!'* he exclaims at one particularly outrageous moment).

Elsewhere, the big, beefy 'Chevrolet' makes Queen's 'I'm In Love With My Car' sound like a reference to a Citroen 2CV and 'Rocky Mountain Suite (Bad Road)' reduces Joe Walsh's 'Way' to the level of Steve Rogers without his Super Soldier serum.

The more I listen to this album, the more I think the time is right for Snuffy to make a triumphant return. Now if only Eddie V. H. and Michael S. would stop quivering in the corner over there, I'd see what could be done about it.



TRIGGER
'Trigger'
(Casablanca NBLP 7092)

ANY ALBUM that contains the line 'special thanks to Gene Simmons' on its cover has just *got* to be good. And 'Trigger' is no exception to the rule.

Released in 1978 on the Casablanca label, this is US heavy pop-rock of the finest kind, most akin to (it's that band again) Kiss' work circa their 'Rock And Roll Over' LP.

A gormless-looking four piece (see that Rod Stewart attemptalike, second from left?) Trigger released just this one platter and then disappeared from sight, never to be heard from again.

A modern-day tragedy, because this disc is jam-packed full of instantly memorable tunes that, with any justice in the world, should have propelled the band into the upper reaches of the American charts, made them greenbacks galore and kept them in snakeskin platforms for the rest of their days.

Producers Dennis Ferrante and Corky Stasiak chose to give the Trigger songs a sparse, rough-edged sound — a delight to these ears but also maybe the reason why the band never made big bucks, Yankee radio being notoriously unreceptive to any music that fails to have its kerrang's kastrated.

All the Trigger members seem to sing lead at one time or another on this LP, and the end result is a most effective mixture of cocksure coarseness ('I've Heard That Line Before') and peerless purity ('Beware of Strangers').

Currently, only Macclesfield's own Silverwing are writing better HP-R (heavy pop-rock, or didn't you start at the beginning?) and three years on this album is still rarely very far from my turntable.

Ironic though that the last track on Trigger's only record should be a delirious dose of success-anticipation entitled 'We're Gonna Make It'. They didn't.

KONNOISSEURS



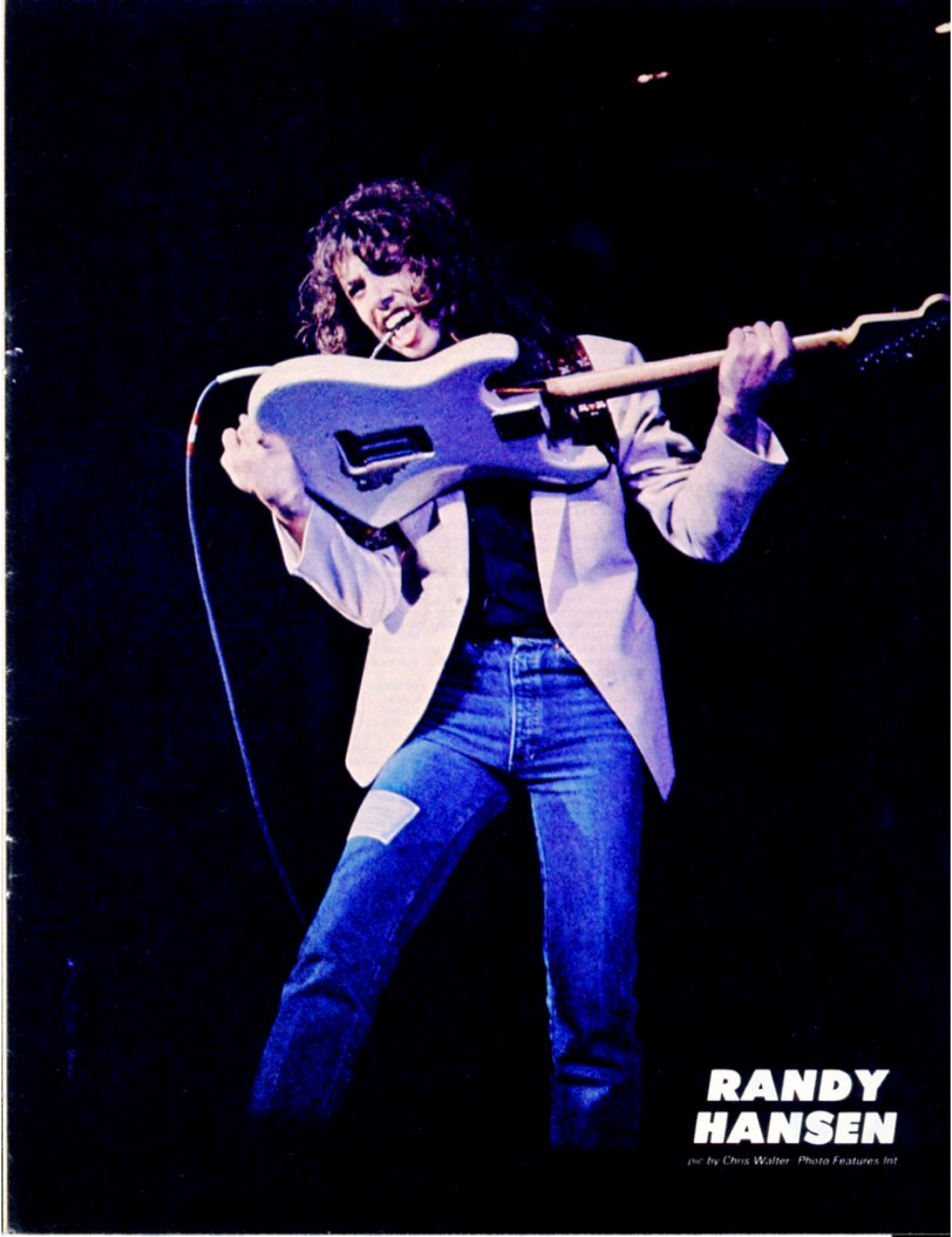
MAGNUM

pic by Paul Cox / LFI



ANGELWITCH

pic by Simon Porter



RANDY HANSEN

pic by Chris Walter Photo Features Int

HANSEN BEAST

by SYLVIE SIMMONS

THERE ARE no drugs backstage. Not even alcohol. For someone who performs like an amphetamine on legs — long cosmic guitar solos played over his head, under his legs, across his shoulder like a violin, forwards, backwards, in the air, on his knees, air-punching, somersaulting, running through the audience and using his teeth as tiny plectrums.

Randy Hansen, former Jimi Hendrix impersonator and the man to hold personally responsible next time someone with long hair gives you the peace-sign, is the only person I've met who can get high on 7-up and whose idea of a fix is something you do to your baby's nappy in between recording sessions on your first H.M. album.

"Someone handed me a beer out there, but I fake it — I stick the bottle in my mouth and tilt my head back and stick my tongue in the end of the bottle so I wouldn't be getting any, but the people think I'm one of the guys, guzzling this beer down."

Quite an easy bit of acting for someone who spent three years doing Hendrix onstage without benefit of strange hallucinogens; tucking his long, stringy hair into an Afro wig, sticking on a guitar and a couple of cheap ladies' scarves, shoving his chalky white face under an orange spotlight and thereby convincing the kids, the Janis Joplin lookalikes that flooded his shows, even Jimi Hendrix's father that this *was* Hendrix. Frank Marino without the skin and personality problems. 'Beatlemania' without the hype.

Hansen and his powertrio Machine Gun (from Jimi's hometown Seattle) toured hard for years, building up the kind of grass-roots following that record companies usually have to pay a fortune in advertising for; selling out first little clubs, then bigger clubs, then 3,000-seaters like tonight's Santa Monica Civic show. All — until now — without benefit of a label.

Hansen was going to record a live Tribute To Jimi album but didn't think much of the tapes and eventually came to feel the same way about the idea.

"I didn't want to hook up with something I couldn't be proud of", said the man who agreed with his mum that presiding over a communal acid-flash of kids still on milk while Hendrix was in his heyday was a strange way to make a living.

"I always had my own music but I wanted to hold back till all the kids were really screaming at me to play it. I'm phasing out the part where I come out as Jimi because I've been doing it for five years now and I figure that if I haven't typecast myself by now I never will, so I might as well get on and do something different. A lot of people warned me I would be stereotyped as a Hendrix impersonator".

Including Mahogany Rush's own Hendrix incarnation Frank Marino, who had a heart-to-heart with young (26) Randy on the matter.

"He said people won't accept him now because he got himself so much into the Hendrix thing. But I don't really care because I'm getting a chance to record my own stuff now and play to audiences, and they're having a good time and I'm having a good time — I'm so happy lately!"

Hansen finds his mouth somewhere betwen all that hair and takes another happy hit at the 7-up can. His debut album on Capitol — "they were the only record company we went to that got excited about my original stuff; the others just saw me as the guy that did Hendrix and all that" — though obviously influenced by your basic cosmic Jimi style and has the expected H.M. themes of drink, drugs, women, rock, and some outlandish grandiose idea of love taking you to heaven and back — is not the Ruttles version of Mahogany Rush you might have anticipated.

Though the production has watered down Randy's searing guitar solos quite a bit, they still burn up the plastic at times and — especially for America where most H.M. is artificially fattened into AOR pomp-rock — is a pretty good start.

RANDY HANSEN is a little bloke — fragile, vague-looking, modest, almost timid, with this permanent spaced-out look in his eyes that's come from constantly "having my mind blown" by the way his career took off. He was going to be a jockey till he got on a horse and it moved quick. He got a job as a roller-skating rink guard till the wheels moved. Life just seemed to be rolling past young Randy, whose first love was always music.

"The guitar's been with me since I was a kid and it was always there for me if I got into trouble or if my mum yelled at me. I'd go into my room and bang out chords as loud as I could on this cheap chainstore guitar and amplifier, and if things got tough at school I'd skip homework and work on a new song."

Being the only boy on the block with a stereo of sorts he got to play everyone's albums. When a mate brought round a Hendrix LP "it blew me away".

A one-time Beatles and Ventures fan goes to see the man in concert, 13-years-old and banging away at the guitar for three years, and gets baptized in the front row at the wet open-air gig as the rain that collected in Jimi's Affro got sprayed on the kids below. He gets together a high school band and turns to Heavy Metal. His first group was a four-piece that played Hendrix, Blackmore and Jeff Beck copies.

Eventually school came to an end and Randy's mum told him to find a job. He got one — a Holiday Inn lounge band playing Sha Na Na, Andrews Sisters and hits of the fabulous 50s to middle-aged businessmen in polyester suits and fat ladies with diamond earrings. Using the name Road Murphy, Randy successfully kept his friends away from the workplace for three years while he payed the rent and perfected his Hendrix playing.

Meanwhile other members of the cover band were broadening their repertoire to include Elton John, Stones and Alice Cooper impersonations for the evening's entertainment. Entering into the spirit of the thing, Randy got up in a frilly blouse ("I used to get all these strange looks when I went shopping in the womens wear department") and flowing scarves belting out "Purple Haze".

"I wanted to keep Jimi's message alive — about hippiedom and peace and love and doing what you want as long as it doesn't hurt anyone else. Jim was 20 years ahead of his time anyway. It wasn't just rock and roll — it was mysticism."

He got fired.

And so the Hendrix tribute show became a full-time job, somehow managing to regularly pack out places, especially on the West Coast, with Randy trying to find a niche for his ever-growing collection of original songs. Then he was approached to play the 'Star Spangled Banner' Hendrix-style on the soundtrack to Francis Ford Coppola's 'Apocalypse Now'.

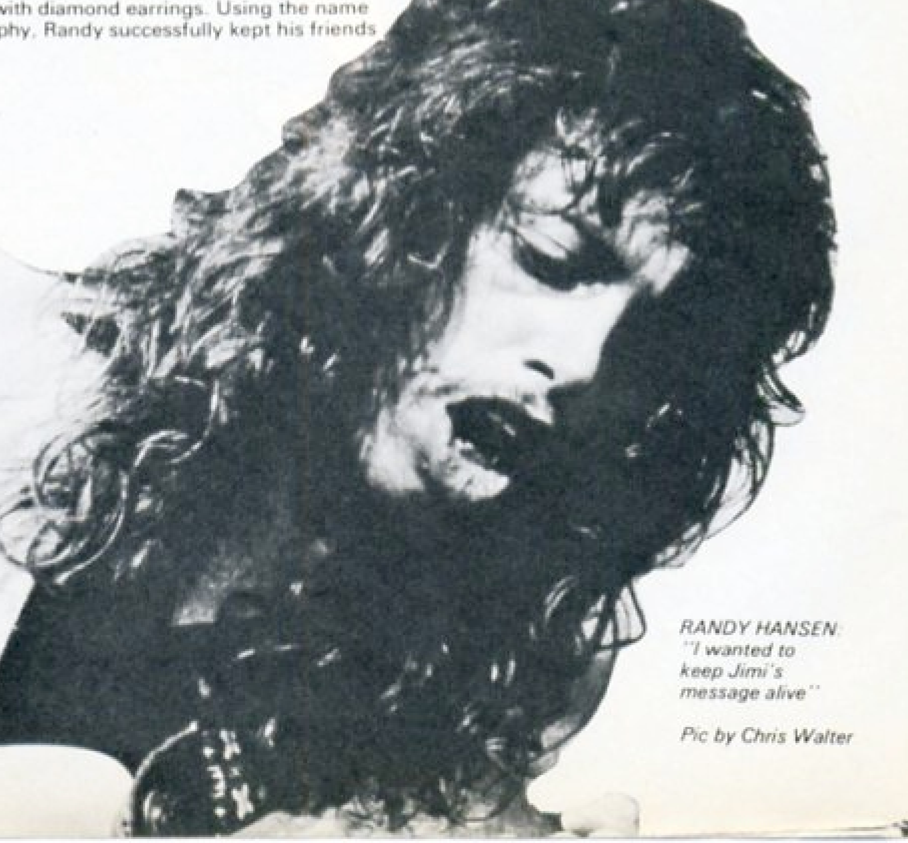
Randy, who thought it was some B-movie, said "sure". The producer who worked with him on the soundtrack lent him a four-track tape recorder to put some of his original ideas down on. And after nixing the idea of a Hendrix novelty album and getting a baby and a new band and another tour out of the way, Randy found a record contract and started on the road again.

He's hoping his next tour will take him to Britain.

He'd like people to think of his own music as "fun and serious at the same time. Have fun but get the message which is to be free but not to hurt yourself. I don't smoke, I don't drink, I have one vice and that's only a small one, marijuana. Drugs bum you out.

"My goal now is to stay recording and keep touring and playing larger venues. Just try to get more people on our side and have a good time. I'm doing my best up there and that's all I can do." Something tonight's Civic crowd — the ones I spoke to see him as America's number one people's musician today; RIP Aerosmith — seemed to appreciate. They were all on their seats when the gig opened with a roar and dry ice, and all leaping about in the aisles for the monopoly money chucked off the stage at the end.

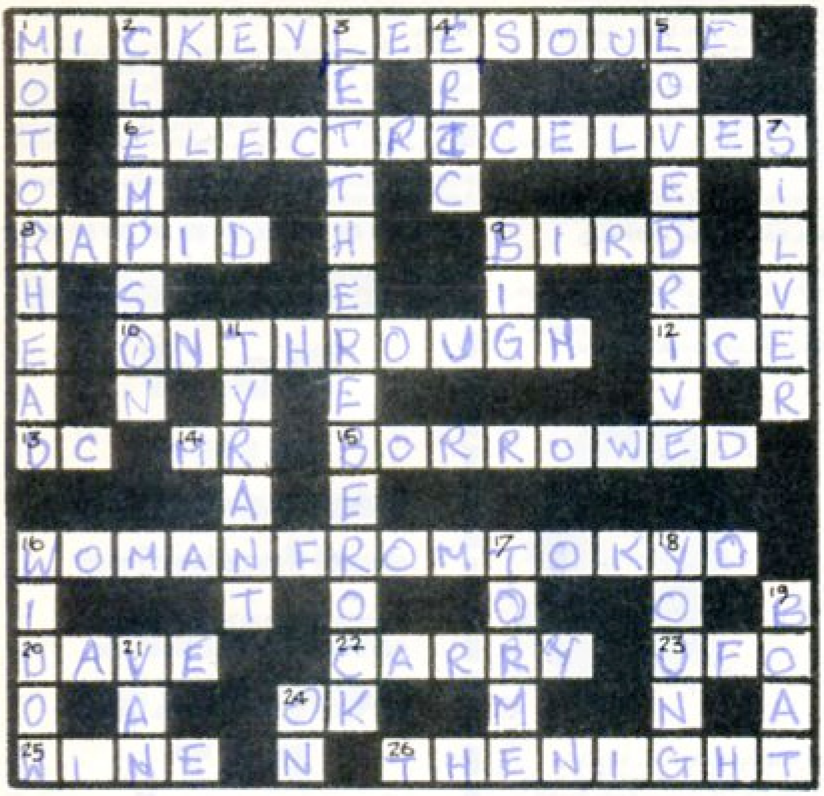
"Wish it was real money", said Hansen. "We're just practicing for when we make it."



RANDY HANSEN: "I wanted to keep Jimi's message alive"

Pic by Chris Walter

KERROSWORD! by Sue Buckley



ACROSS

1. He handled the keyboards in Elf, and had a short spell with the Gillan band (6,3,5)
6 Ronnie Dio was featured vocalist in this band. Their biggest single was 'Hey Look Me Over', and they split up in 1970 (8,5)
8 Fire for Judas Priest (5)
9 Though he sounds like a Mr Tambourine type person, he in fact played guitar in Gillan between '78-'79 (4)
10 and 26 Def Leppard proving their stamina (2,7,3,5)
12 No H.M. gig's complete without the dry type (3)
13 One type of current for 18 (1,1)
14 and 9 Down 'Sweet Silence' is this band's best known metal outing (2,3)
15 Time (on credit) for Styx? (8)
16 Deep Purple's tribute to Yoko Ono? For Konnoseurs, the catalogue no. was PUR 112 (5,4,5)
20 and 2 This guitarist joined forces with Cozy Powell and Greg Ridley in '75 to form a fine band called 'Strange Brew' (4,8)
22 and 24 down Uriah Heep, like 10, seem to have staying power (5,2)
23 They called two doctors, because they'd hit rock bottom (1,1,1)
24 H.M. rules . . . yes? (1,1)
25 What H.M. fans sip in springtime at the sign of the Gypsy Queen (4)
26 See 10.

DOWN

1 They always go over the top (9)
2 See 20.
3 18s plea for our music? (3,5,2,4)
4 Once a yardbird, sometime a domino (4)
5 Sounds like an amorous ride for a band of deadly insects (4,5)
7 The Lone Ranger's horse provides metal for Hawkwind's machine (6)
9 see 14 across
11 8's tribute to Hitler, Mussolini, Caesar, et al? (6)
16 What Bob Daisley's and Steve Ellis's late '70s group "made" (5)
17 This guitarist's first band was 'The Urge' (5)
18 One infant who trod a highway to hell (5)
19 What Styx put on the river (4)
21 Just part of Roth's group lurking in an advance press release (3)
24 See 22

Solution on page 46

PENPALS

This service is FREE to Kerrang! readers. Include a picture – if you dare!

IS THERE anyone out there who likes Led Zeppelin, Jimi Hendrix, AC/DC, Rush and Ozzy *(I think there might be one or two – Ed)*, who thinks that David Coverdale, Robert Plant, Rick Savage and Dennis Stratton are gorgeous and is aged between 14 and 17? I'm a 14½ year old female in desperate need of someone to communicate with (I've been a naughty girl and I'm not allowed to go out or see any of my pals – all say aah!). Any sex will be accepted (I'll forgive the males if they don't like David Coverdale). Males with long hair especially appreciated. I need cheering up and I'm very lonely. – **Katheryn Connaughton, Longworth Manor, Longsight Lane, Harwood, Bolton.**

I AM a 17-year-old female headbanger who is into Led Zeppelin particularly and not Motorhead. Seeks male and female penpals 16 plus. – **Kay Bradbury, 45 Villa Crescent, Bulkington, Nuneaton, Warks.**

I WOULD like a headbanger penpal, male or female, around 14-16. I am 14 and like AC/DC, Gillan, Motorhead, Saxon, Iron Maiden, Thin Lizzy, Meatloaf and many more. – **Leedyson, 3 Farfield Ave, Farsley, Pudsey, W. Yorks LS28.**

I HAVE a lot of mates who are also into this fabulous music but I want to make more friends all over the country and abroad. I am a leather girl and a heavy rock lover! – **P A Martin, 17 Chapel Park Road, St. Leonards On Sea, East Sussex TN37 6HR.**

I AM a female headbanger, long fair hair, blue eyes and I would like to hear from headbangers from my part of the world, 13 and up. I am into Joe Lynn Turner, Whitesnake, Motorhead, Girlschool, Saxon, AC/DC, Status Quo, Rush, Krokus, Rose Tattoo, Trust and Tygers of Pan Tang – **Jenny Condon, Norfolk House, Promenade De Verdun (down the road from Francis Rossi, no less), Purley, Surrey.**

LONELY female HM freak would like to hear from males/females anywhere, 14 plus. I am 14 andinto Motorhead, Quo, Whitesnake and many others. – **Sarah Carver, 8 Causeway Glade, Dore, Sheffield S17 3EZ.**

WOULD any male Quo/Sabbath freak between 19 and 25 write to me and swap news. – **Karen Blooman, 1 Shelley Close, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE 18 7NF.**

SAXON, Rainbow, Whitesnake . . . great to see you covering the greatest HM bands. Perhaps there's a lady headbanger out there with the same tastes wanting a penpal. – **Dave GilFillan, 1 Ivanhoe Road, Edenthorpe, Doncaster, S Yorks DN3 2JS.**

I WOULD like to get in touch with other HM freaks in my area or surrounding counties so that we can meet and go to gigs. Preferably females. – **Andrew Siddall, 10 Portley Lane, Caterham, Surrey CR3 3HT.**

I AM a devoted female rock fan – a rare species around my area. I was converted about 1½ years ago by AC/DC's magnificent "Touch too much" and have been keenly interested in rock music ever since. Now I'm trying desperately to catch up on all the great bands I've missed out on and at the same time keep up with all the newer bands emerging which is quite a task! If I was wearing a hat I sure would take it off to Kerrang! for making it easier.

My main enthusiasms are Whitesnake and AC/DC and Tygers of Pan Tang and Motorhead and . . . just about everyone else I can get my hands on (not literally of course!) – but then again if David Coverdale isn't doing anything tomorrow . . .)

I'd love other crazy headbangers of any age to write to me, male or female. – **Suzy, "Amethyst", Broadoak Lane, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN39 4LQ.**

I AM an 18-year-old HM/HR fan from Belfast, particularly into Deep Purple, Whitesnake, Rainbow, Rush, modern Sabbath and much of the NWOBHM. I would like male or female, intelligent and preferably literate, penpals anywhere. – **Brian Bell, 28 Ladybrook Crescent, Belfast BT11 9ET, Co Antrim, N Ireland.**



I'D REALLY, really, really love to have someone to go to gigs with. – **Nazrul Islam Naz, 18 Myrdle Street, London E1.**

I AM 17 and into most HM especially Kiss, AC/DC, Motorhead and Scorpions. I would like to hear from males or females anywhere in the UK, 15 plus. – **Andy Smith, 26 Poundfield Road, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 5EP.**

I THOUGHT I'd try my luck and see if anyone wants to write to an old lady of 22 who likes heavy music, motorbikes and people with a wild sense of humour. I am the mother of a four-year-old headbanger. I was married to a Hells Angel until 20 months ago when I was made a widow, so I would like someone to write and cheer me up. – **Brenda Rose, 6 Clare Street, Denton, Manchester.**

MY NAME'S Steph and me and my friend Sharon are looking for a couple of male headbangers who don't live a million miles away to write to. We would like them to have bikes (complete with long hair, denims, leather and studs) so they can come and visit us as we are totally bored – we are too wild and have too much energy for our quiet little villages.

We are sick of being put down as scruffy because we wear what we feel comfortable in, namely denim jackets, jeans, studded wristbands etc, and don't behave as 'proper young ladies' are supposed to. Neither of us smoke and we are proud of that although we are partial to a little (?) drink. We are 16 and would like boys aged about 16-19 to contact us. They must like Rainbow and a good argument. – **Stephanie McConnell, 10 Stewart Avenue, Ochiltree, Ayrshire, Scotland.**

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ROLLING STONES	2	1	—	—	—	—	—
RUSH	7	8	7	1	1	1	2
SAXON	1	6	3	1	1	1	1
SCORPIONS	2	5	2	1	1	—	2
STATUS QUO	10	4	7	1	2	2	1
THIN LIZZY	12	6	5	—	1	1	—
UFO	4	4	2	1	1	1	2
WHITESNAKE	2	7	3	1	1	1	1
WHO	2	1	2		—	—	—
YES	9	3	2		2	1	1

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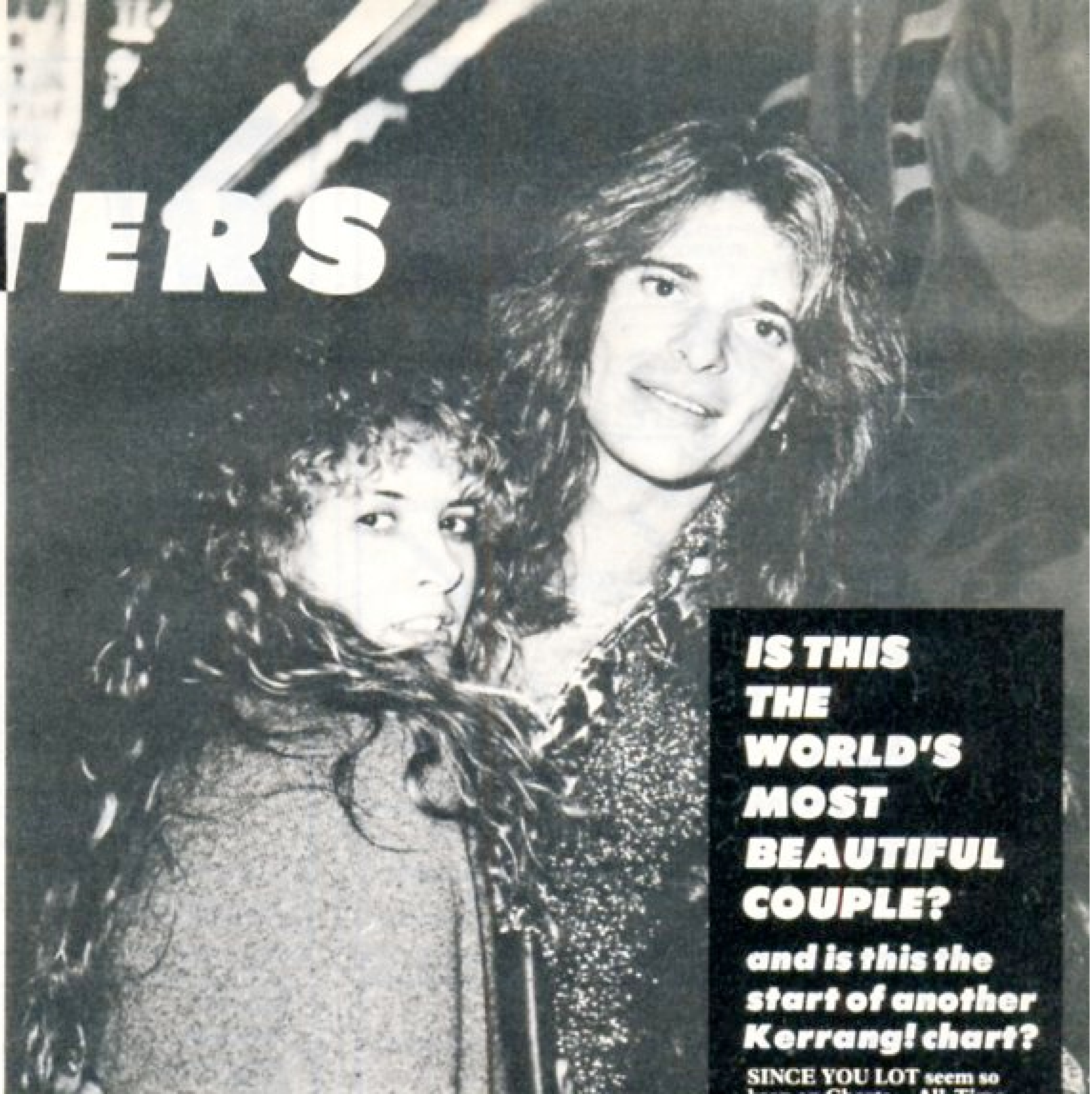
LETTERS

KERRANG '2' highly commendable, but must admit I'm highly intrigued by the prospect of no. 3 featuring a report on San Francisco's 'Day On The Green' – to feature "every American HM band you've ever heard of". Every? – (are you sure you don't mean *decade* on the green?) On the enclosed list you'll see 300 bands for starters, and if they all play, I've calculated they'll all have exactly 4 mins. 48 secs. each in the day (and that's not allowing time for change-overs!)

If it were an English festival, do you realise the consequences of this ? It'll only take someone like Rush with their long, Tolstoyan epics and four other bands will have zero time allotted. Such strict time-keeping would result in Whitesnake having to skip the songs and go straight into solos (so, what's new?), Motorhead only having time for 80 songs, Saxon only having time to plunder half of the AC/DC catalogue of riffs, Blackmore causing a riot by not doing an opener (let alone encore) and Eddie Van Halen accomplishing his speed-of-light solos in *minus* 20 seconds!

And, most of all, spare a thought for the likes of Bruce Bruce and Phil Lewis who would be utter wrecks after all that high-speed backstage ligging ... **John Watson, 237 Hookstone Road, Harrogate, N. Yorks.**

Er . . . it's what we call Journalistic Licence. In the end we got a bit bored with the Day On The Green and decided to just run the colour pix of Heart and BOC. Sorry! – Ed.



DAVE LEE ROTH and STEVIE NICKS see letter on right

IS THIS THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL COUPLE?

and is this the start of another Kerrang! chart?

SINCE YOU LOT seem so keen on Charts – All-Time Top 100 and so on – how about doing one to discover HM's Most Beautiful Man? I hereby nominate Dave Lee Roth of Van Halen as my all-time Hunk. Oh, and since I suppose in the interests of Men's Lib you'll have to compile an HM's Most Beautiful Woman chart, my boyfriend nominates Stevie Nicks, although I don't know what he sees in her. — Tracy Billington, Bolton, Lancs.

IT ALL sounds disgustingly Sexist to us, but if you insist . . . Put your three nominations for the Most Beautiful Man/Woman in HM on a postcard and send 'em to us by September 11. We'll publish the results in Kerrang! No. 5. Address your votes to Most Beautiful Man / Woman, Kerrang!, 40 Longacre, London WC2

WE ARE writing to you not only to express our concern but also our annoyance on your recent article in *Kerrang* regarding Anvil, the Canadian heavy metal band.

We would like to inform you than Anvil is a four-piece rock band from the North East (Durham), in fact – we consist of vocals, guitar, bass and drums and we have had the name Anvil for the past three years along with our own logo. This fact can be verified by various organisations including Melody Maker (*Who? – Ed.*), Metro Radio (Newcastle) who have helped us in our career and various record companies, who are, at present, considering us for contractual purposes.

We are, at the moment, based in Leicester. In fact, a few months ago, we went to the extreme of moving band and crew from the North East to our present address following favourable interest from a number of record companies, publishers and management companies. Moving to the Midlands has improved accessibility to London and has allowed us to build up our contacts.

We have just recently completed successful dates on the rock club circuit, including Wigan Pier Club, Romeo and Juliet's at Birmingham and supporting Geddes Axe at the Marquee back in May.

No doubt, as you will understand, our annoyance at your article because we have been working desperately hard to promote ourselves as a rock band and your article could be very misleading to followers we have picked up en route! – **Anvil, 14 Beaconsfield Road, Leicester LE3 0FE.**

HI, THERE, all you metal-brained bangers. How dare anyone criticise (I can't spell that) the name of your (and our) wonderful mag. *Kerrang!* is a wonderful name, just right. Changing it to anything else would make the mag start to deteriorate. 'Cos what else are you going to change? Don't! Please! – **153 Queensway, Whitchurch, Shropshire SY13 1HF.**

I AM disgusted, shocked, stunned, let-down and totally kerranged! I collected my second copy of *Kerrang!* only to find that there was still no sign of Jimi Hendrix. As a loyal fan of Mr Hendrix, I feel that he deserves at least a small space dedicated to him (if not a cover spread) as one of the masters of *Kerrang!*, along with Angus and Ritchie. So, let's show he may be dead (sob, sob) but he sure isn't forgotten. – **Pete Brockwell, 30 Grafton Road, Aylesbury, Bucks.**

Your wish is our command: The ultimate Hendrix discography is in next month's Kerrang!

I AM very pleased that you are trying to separate the wimps from the headbangers. I'm a headbanger by music and character and all these wimps make me sick.

I know a wimp who calls himself a heavy rocker yet if you talk about any *really* heavy stuff he doesn't want to know. He says he likes Motorhead just so I won't call him a poser but he never plays it. Unfortunately, my record player has exploded with rapid fire Judas Priest, and I have to go around my mate's house now.

If you ever get in contact with marvellous Iron Maiden, would you let them know that I've converted a punk into a headbanger because his girlfriend started stripping off to 'Running Free'.

I would like to say hello to Pete Siddle from Hull and Steve Ryder from Frodsham in Cheshire, both heavy rockers who were doing time in the same borstal as me. If they go to Port Vale on August 1st, *(too late – Ed.)* I'll see them there because I live on the doorstep on the place. – **Fluffhead and the Cobridge Overkillers from Stoke-on-Trent.**

KERROSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS
1. Mickey Lee Soule; 6. Electric Elves; 8. Rapid; 9. Byrd; 10. On Through; 12. Ice; 13. D.C.; 14. Mr; 15. Borrowed; 16. Woman From Tokyo; 20. Dave; 22. Carry; 23. U.F.O.; 24. O.K.; 25. Wine; 26. The Night

DOWN
1. Motorhead; 2. Clempson; 3. Let There Be Rock; 4. Eric; 5. Love Drive; 7. Silver; 9. Big; 11. Tyrant; 16. Widow; 17. Torme; 18. Young; 19. Boat; 21. Van; 24. On; 26. The Night.

pic by Richard Creamer

WE ARE writing concerning the letter in issue two from Belfast's "only heavy metal disc jockey", Vibrating Len. We would like to point out that the situation portrayed in his letter about the HM nights at the Viking is far from reality.

We were the third band that played there and, on that occasion, we were, as a group, very disappointed in our performance. This was, mainly, due to a faulty guitar connection. At this point, we would like to make it clear that we are not slagging off because we didn't go down well, although he himself announced that we played a "very fine set."

We were *not* provided with a cassette, we purchased our own, and there was no recording engineer present. We had to *ask* the DJ to record it for us, the quality was very poor. Also, the only photographs we received were those taken by the bassist's girlfriend. Not what you would call a resident photographer.

And as for the financial arrangements, there were people totalling 57 in this lounge which is not much bigger than a garage, each being admitted for £1. We only received £18 when we should have received over £25. Before we were considered, the aforementioned D.J's fees as well as the doorman's fees were deducted.

Also, during the soundcheck, the manager ordered us to turn the volume down. The total possible output was around 250 Watts yet we were restrained at a third of this output, less than when we were practising! – **The Sons of Feanor, Belfast.**

I WAS reading through *Kerrang!* no. 2 when my eyes fell upon the fan club addresses, Angel Witch, in particular. You say at the top of the page, "If you do get ripped off, let us know", so I am doing just that.

I sent off to the fan club on 26.2.81, nearly six months ago and I still have not heard anything. I sent a postal order (2306 335354) to the value of £2 to cover the cost of newsletters, lyrics, photos, etc, and, when I didn't receive my goods, I wrote to them complaining. I have written five times in all, but still have not received my merchandise. I was going to send for a sweatshirt but now this has happened I have changed my mind. – **Martin Gill, 34 Fairlawn Drive, The Paddock, Kingswinford, Brierley Hill, West Midlands.**

HEADBANGING IS an art as you all know.
But there is one thing it tends to show.
While rockers bang their heads with might.
Their dandruff is set up into flight.

As they all rock together to the sound of Rush.
You are sometimes hit with the odd hair-brush.
That may have been lost some years ago.
Among the fuzz and stench of B.O.

A pretty picture this does not paint.
The sight of some headbangers could make you faint.
So, all who read this, please don't laugh.
Is it you who needs a BATH? – **Dan, the Cleanest Rocker In Town, 195 Honeywell Crescent, Chapelhall, Scotland.**

I THINK *Kerrang!* is OK but it lacks the one vital ingredient to boogie . . . and that's . . . QUO! Yes. QUO! The very essence of the British H.M. bands, the influence, the inspiration, the stature envied by all . . .

So, come on, let's have Quo pin-ups, Quo interviews, Quo discographies, Quo biographies, Francis Rossi, more Francis Rossi, more Quo, more Rick Parfitt, lovable Rick Parfitt, much more RIck Parfitt, Rick Parfitt pin-ups, Rick Parfitt in shock erotic poses, Rick Parfitt totally naked, lots of Francis Rossi, extra Quo features, Quo multi-page specials, more Quo multi-page specials, Rick Parfitt entire issue specials (!) Quo gear, Quo equipment, Quo clothes to win in competitions, Quo to win in competitions, Rick Parfitt to win in competitions, Quo crosswords, Quo cartoons, Quo gossip, more Quo gossip, Quo live sex scandals, Francis Rossi's sex life scandal, Rick Parfitt does it 'my way' sex scandal, shock gossip, how to worship your favourite Quo man, guide to getting Rick Parfitt into bed, vital statistics of the Quo boys, how to change your name/clothes/hair style to Francis Rossi, etc, etc . . . you know that sorta thing. Hope you get the message. – **Jane, queen of the Quo fans, Quo Road, Quo Town.**

I HAVE come to the conclusion that Geoff Barton is a w****r. He goes and slags off Def Leppard, and then when it becomes hip to like Leppard again, he bullshits his way through a load of excuses!

The interview in *Kerrang!* II was disgusting. Just what is the first paragraph supposed to mean? What is the point in putting it in? He then goes on to call us insects. You are the only insect, Barton!

If you really thought Leppard were that bad, why have you suddenly changed your mind? I've always had time for Leppard. OK so some of their stuff may not be so good, but that doesn't mean I chuck cans at them. – **Apache, Cirencester**

WHY HAS it taken over a decade of guitar riffin', drum smashing keyboard rockin', ear bursting, brainstorming concerts, albums and festivals for somebody to click and bring out a mag for those of us in this ill-fated world of ours that always will follow the bands that create through sheer energy some of the greatest music ever written.

Thanks for the Rainbow feature and family tree, and for featuring some of the lesser known bands like More because I'm a great believer in giving new guys on the HM scene a chance. I mean some of the stuff they play is brilliant and if such songs were played by the bands that have already made it they would become classics but without the media headbangers getting to hear them, these songs could so easily be forgotten forever.

I run a HM roadshow called Brainstorm in the Bristol area. I've been going for over a year now, but trying to get my name around is like trying to enjoy disco crap.

Yes, I've put ads in the paper and done leaflet drops etc, etc, but have you ever heard of a headbanger who reads a straight paper?

I know there are people out there who want to hear what I play – Sabbath, Purple, Rainbow, Saxon, Motorhead, Rush, Quo, Blackfoot, AC/DC, etc – rather than run-of-the-mill disco shows. I know it's a bit cheeky to ask you to print this but it's all in the cause of keeping good music alive. – **John Mason, 7 Miller House, Merchants Road, Clifton, Bristol 8, Tel 824323.**

THE 'Sabs' discography wasn't accurate. 'Snowblind' is the B side of the latest Paranoid single and you missed out 'Never Say Die' altogether in the album list. Still, it's a pretty good service and I would like to see a discography of 'Rush' in the future. – **Michael Davies, 218 Newport Road, Caldicot, Gwent.**

A Rush discography is coming up in Kerrang! *No. 5 – Ed)*

BARRY LAZELL made two mistakes in your Sabbath discography. The 1977 and 1980 re-releases of 'Paranoid' (single) did not have 'Sabbath, Bloody Sabbath' on the B-sides but 'Snowblind', in both cases. He also failed to mention 'Children of the Sea/Lady Evil' in the singles list. What about the rest of the compilations, not to mention the Aussie (no relation) import 'Best of'. – **Steve, Blackpool.**

TELL Jackie Smith (Letters, Issue 2) not to worry about being too old to be a headbanger at nearly 27. I've been a headbanger since before the term was invented and, at 36, I'm still not too old. Give me another 20 years and I might need a couple of crutches but I ain't giving up without a fight. – **Maureen Hart, 31 Poplar Shaw, Upshire, Waltham Abbey, Essex.**

NICE CHANGE to have a mag with pictures of gorgeous, sexy men (instead of the women in most publications). So can we have some more pics of David Coverdale, David Lee Roth and Ted Nugent, playing a see-thru guitar this time (see pic in Issue No. 1 to know what I mean)? And can we carry on with the 'World's Most Beautiful Man' contest?

In answer to Jackie Smith (letter in no. 2) no, you're not too old to be a headbanger at 27. I am one at 34, nearly as old as Lemmy and Ritchie Blackmore. If they can get away with it so can we! – **Ankaret, old hippy from Brum.**

HOW ABOUT some pics of Alice Cooper (I'm getting lonely without him) and his old group (now the Billion Dollar Babies). Whatever happened to them anyway? I miss them very much after being a fan since 1973, having to try and get over losing them to Bob Ezrin, Dick Wagner and co. (Who does Alice think he is replacing them with such crap people anyway.) I even turned to Cozy Powell and Alex Lifeson (my God, and even liked them). The picture of Alice in *Sounds* (July 25) was terribly pathetic really: try and print some decent ones PLEASE. Glen Burton and Neal Smith Rule – Alma Mater, 34 Borland Road, Glasgow.

How about this one below: the brand new Alice Cooper. Seems he's dropped the old satanic image in favour of the Japanese Housewife look. – Ed.



pic by Chris Walter

GILLAN

pic by Andre Csillag

